

Peace before gas to Israel — Qatar

DUBAI (R) — Israel is seeking to import natural gas from Qatar but Doha said progress in Middle East peace talks must precede any deal. Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jaber Al Thani told reporters in Washington "there is an Israeli proposal concerning this issue but they know our conditions for this," the official Qatari News Agency reported on Friday. "We have made it clear to Israel that there will be no progress in our ties before there is big progress in the peace process and specially in the Syrian and Lebanon tracks," added the minister, who has met Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. Sheikh Hamad, who is on a visit to the United States, is the only Gulf Arab minister known to hold talks with Israel. On Wednesday he said there could be moves taken soon to end the Arab boycott against Israel. Israeli media have said the gas deal is estimated at \$1 billion and would involve shipping gas to Israel from Qatar, which controls one of the world's largest gas fields, as well as through Israel to Europe. A spokeswoman at the Israeli energy ministry said on Thursday a number of other Gulf states had offered to supply gas to the Jewish state.

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Jordan seeks retrial of its nationals in Kuwait

AMMAN (Petra) — The Foreign Ministry is exerting intensified efforts with several Arab, Islamic and foreign countries as well as the Arab League and the U.N. urging them to mediate with the Kuwaiti authorities to review sentences issued against Jordanian nationals. Recently, the Foreign Ministry called the ambassadors of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council seeking their countries' mediation in the issue and calling for retrials of the Jordanians, most of them accused of "collaborating" with Iraq during its six-month occupation of Kuwait. The Foreign Ministry has also called several ambassadors of Arab states in Amman for the same purpose. It has also contacted Jordanian diplomatic missions in Arab and Islamic states and at international organisations to continue their efforts in this regard.

Sudan blames rebels for talks collapse

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan's government Friday blamed its main rebel opponents for the breakdown of talks to guarantee relief convoys in the famine-threatened south. The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) had shown an "inhuman" attitude in turning down the government offer to guarantee "safe corridors" for supplies to around two million people in the war-torn south, a member of the government's peace mission said in Sudan daily Al Sudan Al Hadeeth. The government was still negotiating a date for peace talks to start with John Garang's SPLA despite the collapse of the Nairobi relief talks, said Musa Sidahmad. The government declaration follows rebels claims Thursday that the government, despite international appeals for peace, had launched a dry season offensive in the south to cut rebel supply lines.

Drugs, alcohol blamed for Gulf accidents

ABU DHABI (AFP) — More than 4,000 people died in car accidents in Gulf Arab states in 1990 and they were mostly caused by drugs and alcohol, a report by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) said. Around 99,300 accidents took place in the six-country GCC in 1990, killing 4,092 people and seriously injuring 4,671, said the report from the organisation's Riyadh-based secretariat printed by the UAE daily Al Bayan. "Around 80 per cent of the accidents were caused by males aged between 11 and 30 years and most of them were due to speed, drugs and drunk driving," the report said. A breakdown showed Saudi Arabia was worst with 3,186 deaths, while 406 people were killed in Oman, 393 in the UAE and the rest in Qatar and Bahrain. The report did not include Kuwait, which was occupied by Iraqi forces during the second half of 1990.

Mubarak: No dialogue with Islamists

CAIRO (R) — President Hosni Mubarak has ruled out dialogue with Muslim fundamentalist groups, saying election successes by Islamic groups in Algeria and Jordan would not be allowed to occur in Egypt. "There will be no dialogue with illegal groups. The constitution in Egypt bans the establishment of religious parties," Mr. Mubarak said in a speech published in Egyptian newspapers Friday. "The experience of Jordan and Algeria will not be repeated in Egypt... no one can impose a vision on the Egyptians under the banner of religion," he warned. Egypt has been under emergency law since the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981 and human rights groups say the police have tortured detainees and violated human rights in the fight against political violence. More than 280 people have been killed and 670 injured since militants began a violent campaign to oust the Egyptian government and install a purist Islamic state. The casualties were policemen, foreign tourists or members of Islamic groups.

Majali asks Sanctions Committee for fair treatment for Jordan

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Jordanian Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali assured a U.N. committee Thursday his country was causing serious problems for its economy.

Jordan has complained in the past that the Security Council committee monitoring sanctions imposed on Iraq since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait was slow or inconsistent in dealing with applications to export humanitarian goods to Baghdad.

"The Jordanian economy is suffering quite a lot, so we tried to put to the good committee the problems, and hopefully they will understand," Mr. Majali told reporters after addressing the 15-nation body, which always meets behind closed doors.

"In fact we want the Security Council to look into compensating Jordan on the damage which has been taken to our economy by applying strictly the sanctions," he said.

Mr. Majali, who accompanied King Hussein on a visit to Washington earlier this week, came to the United Nations with Finance Minister Sami Gammoh and Information Minister Jawad Al Anani.

It is rare for a senior government minister to address the committee, whose meetings are usually attended by ambassadors or lower-ranking diplomats.

The prime minister said the sanctions affected Jordanian factories producing humanitarian goods such as household appliances and cloth, since most were based on serving the Iraqi market.

Jordan also experienced difficulties because many of its own imports faced inspection on the high seas, incurring higher insurance rates and cargo fees.

Dr. Majali said Jordan's annual losses as a result of observing the Security Council embargo in Iraq were almost \$300 million.

Ships bound for the Red Sea port of Aqaba are inspected to ensure they are not carrying contraband cargo destined for transport by road to Iraq.

Dr. Majali said he asked the committee to look into the "hundreds and thousands of applications" which Jordan sent requesting permission to export certain items to Iraq.

It wanted the committee to deal with them "as quickly as possible" and hoped it would apply broad criteria rather than act on a case-by-case basis.

Asked about the oil which Jordan obtains from Iraq with Security Council consent, he said his country had to export some "humanitarian goods in payment for what we get in oil."

Asked whether the committee questioned Jordan's oil relationship with Iraq, he replied: "No."

Despite the trade sanctions, Amman has been allowed to import Iraqi oil under a deal which originally paid down Baghdad's debts to Jordan incurred during the 1980-1988



U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali greets Thursday. At right is Jordan's permanent representative to the U.N. Adnan Abu Odeh (AFP)

Iran-Iraq war.

Dr. Majali said the committee chairman promised to distribute to members the text of his speech and pledged to "look into it in a very serious way."

In a letter to the committee last month, Jordan's U.N. representative Adnan Abu Odeh complained that applications for permission to export goods to Iraq were not dealt with in a consistent manner.

He said: "Shipment of certain materials could be exported to Iraq if approved, that approval should be the basis for approving to export similar materials without going into the current detailed time-consuming procedure."

Body of late air force chief is expected home

AMMAN (J.T.) — The body of the late Major General Awni Bilal Qasem, chief of staff of the Royal Jordanian Air Force, who died in Washington Thursday would be flown to Amman in the next two days, close relatives said Friday.

His Majesty King Hussein Friday sent a message to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Mirai condoling him over the sudden death of Maj. Gen. Qasem.

King Hussein expressed his heart-felt condolences over the death of Maj. Gen. Qasem and requested Gen. Mirai to convey his condolences to the Armed Forces and to the Qasem family.

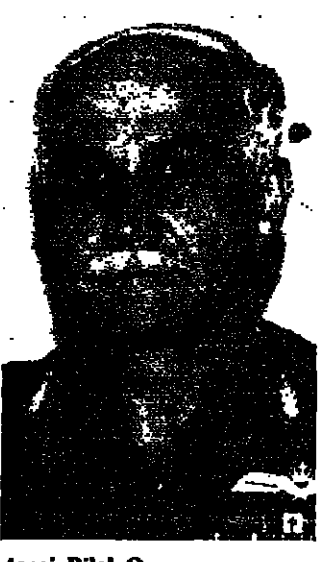
The late major general, who assumed his post in 1993, has been among the delegation to the Joint U.S. Jordanian Military Commission holding talks in Washington over the past week.

Maj. Gen. Qasem was in his hotel when he had a heart attack and was rushed to George Washington Hospital where he passed away.

Born in Amman, Awni Bilal Qasem was educated here and later joined the Royal Air Force, gradually rising to the rank of chief of staff late last year.

The late major general, who was accompanied by his wife to Washington, is survived by two sons and two daughters.

The late Qasem was born in Amman in 1945. He finished his secondary education at Raghdan School. He joined the Royal Jordanian Air Force in 1964. He was sent on a scholarship to the United Kingdom and graduated in 1966 as pilot. He held several posts, including those of squadron and base commander, director of air operations, military attaché in Paris, inspector general, and assistant to the chief of staff



Awni Bilal Qasem

for air force and air defence corps.

In April 1993, he was appointed chief of staff for Royal Jordanian Air Force. He was promoted to major general on Dec. 5, 1993. He was awarded several medals, including Jordan's Independence, Kawkab, and Nahda medals.

He held a masters degree in military sciences.

Uzbek jets bomb Kabul

KABUL (Agencies) — Warplanes belonging to the forces of former communist General Abdul Rashid Dostum repeatedly raided civilian areas of Kabul Friday, but the city was mostly spared ground fighting on the day of prayer.

A few minutes after midnight the former diplomatic enclave on Wazir Akbar Khan in the northeast of Kabul was shaken by the explosions of the bombs weighing at least 250 kilograms, security guards said.

Miraculously, there were no casualties to add to the growing list of hospital cases in Kabul, which have now topped 11,000 injured and 800 dead, according to figures released by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

President Burhanuddin Rabbani's planes targeted forces of Dostum ally Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's headquarters Friday in Charrasayad, about 25 kilometres south of the capital, according to Rabbani sources.

Around 9:00 a.m. (0430 GMT) a Dostum jet again raided Kabul. This unleashing three or four bombs against Asmayi Mountain, where the city's television tower and the Defence Ministry's heavy weapons are located.

A geyser of smoke was seen shooting skywards at the base of Bini Mahru following a third Dostum jet raid just before noon.

Except for isolated small-arms fire, and three rockets which slammed into the shopping complex opposite the Pul-i-Kheshti Mosque at noon, Kabul — now in its 28th day of fighting — was abnormally quiet Friday, with front-line fighters apparently resting after a five-hour firefight Thursday.

The Kabul fire-brigade fought a valiant but losing fight against the huge fire started by the exploding rockets, which blazed unchecked for an hour through several two-storey buildings opposite the Pul-i-Kheshti Mosque, gutting them completely, and sending a fall of grey smoke over the capital.

King, Queen on Austria visit

Combined agency despatches

THEIR MAJESTIES King Hussein and Queen Noor Friday began a several-day visit to Austria during which the King will meet senior Austrian officials.

Their Majesties were seen off from Washington by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Information Minister Jawad Al Anani, Finance Minister Sami Gammoh, Jordan's Ambassador to the U.S. Fayez Al Tarawneh and several officials from the State Department.

The King and Queen had paid a several-day visit to Washington, where the King met with President Bill Clinton, senior officials and American leaders.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin welcomed the announcement from King

Hussein that the Monarch had no objections to meeting him, a spokesman said Thursday.

King Hussein said in Washington Wednesday that he had no hang-ups about meeting with Mr. Rabin.

The prime minister would welcome a meeting with King Hussein, said spokesman Gad Ben-Ari. "Certainly such a statement by King Hussein is encouraging."

Mr. Ben Ari said no preparations were underway for such a meeting.

"He is a very serious man, very experienced, enlightened, who knows the material and himself," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said of King Hussein.

Health Minister Haim Ramon said the peace process needed such public encounters.

"Definitely in light of the relations and progress in the

peace talks, the time has come to meet openly," Mr. Ramon said.

"An open meeting, beyond the actual results, has a great psychological effect, warms hearts to peace, and creates on both sides more trust in the peace talks and the ability to live in peace," he said.

Israel and Jordan signed an agreement for a peace agreement on Sept. 14.

Even headline legislator Ariel Sharon from the opposition Likud Party welcomed a meeting with King Hussein, saying that he hoped such a meeting would divert Israel from the autonomy plan with the Palestinians.

Likud opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu said he hoped King Hussein would agree to meet with him as the leader of a "substantial portion of the Israeli public."

(Continued on page 5)

Arafat, Peres meet in Davos today to advance self-rule deal

Combined agency despatches

PALESTINIAN leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres meet today in Davos, Switzerland, in an effort to settle differences in the implementation of the Sept. 13 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accord on interim Palestinian autonomy.

Mr. Peres headed for the talks warning that much work remained to be done before Palestinian self-rule could start.

The Peres-Arafat encounter at the World Economic Forum in Davos has been built up as make-or-break for the autonomy talks. But Israeli officials were anxious Friday to play down expectations of a quick deal.

"Although I am generally an optimist I cannot promise that an accord will be reached in Davos," Mr. Peres said. "We still have a lot of work to do, and a lot to consider."

He and Mr. Arafat are due to examine a list of 12 points of disagreement over launching autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, which was drawn up at talks in Cairo this week.

The PLO's chief negotiator at the Cairo talks, Nabil Shaath, told AFP that "some progress was certainly made during 36 hours of negotiations, but it was insufficient."

Dr. Shaath said the PLO "insists that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho ends on the date set by the accord" — April 13.

"We will not accept any delay."

Israeli troops were to have begun withdrawing on Dec. 13 but the two sides have been wrangling over who should control border crossings and the size of the future autonomous Jericho area in the West Bank.

The PLO representative in Cairo, Said Kamal, said that if Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres ironed out the differences in Davos, negotiators would meet in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Tabu to prepare the text of an agreement.

Mr. Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would then sign it, he added.

Uri Savir, foreign ministry director general who headed the Israeli delegation in Cairo, said that "we reached agreement on some dossiers and progress was made."

A senior foreign ministry official added: "The negotiations are making headway and that is the essential thing. Even if an agreement is not reached in Davos there should be substantial progress, and an agreement will be reached after a second or third meeting."

He recalled that the secret negotiations in Oslo last year, which resulted in the declaration of principles signed in September, had survived "very serious crises."

Mr. Peres will meet Mr. Arafat on Saturday and Sunday and could extend his stay if the talks are productive. Environment Minister Yossi Sarid said.

Mr. Rabin meanwhile told the French daily Liberation that although Mr. Arafat considered the Gaza-Jericho accord as the "first step towards an independent Palestinian state... at this stage, we cannot agree to any elements which impinge on our sovereignty."

However, he added that implementing the first phase of Palestinian autonomy would mark a "point of no return."

Mr. Sarid, who accompanied Mr. Peres to Switzerland, said: "Even an optimist like myself cannot guarantee that we will come back with any agreements."

In an Israel Radio interview, Mr. Sarid said the main sticking point was Israel's insistence on reserving the option of checking "anyone or anything" crossing into the planned self-rule enclaves in Gaza and Jericho.

"Israel cannot give up this option. We are talking about a pure issue of security and there is no country in the world that would relinquish this option," he said.

The border question has been the toughest obstacle, since it pits Israel's security demands against the Palestinians' insistence that an Israeli presence at crossings would violate the autonomy promised in the Israel-PLO accord.

Egypt's Middle East News Agency reported, without quoting sources, that the negotiators in 12 hours of talks Thursday had defined how the border posts would work.

Donors agree to fund most of Palestinian start-up costs

PARIS (Agencies) — International aid donors have agreed to fund most, but not all, of the start-up costs of Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, the World Bank said Friday.

At a special meeting on aid to the occupied territories, donors endorsed a proposed Palestinian budget for 1994, pledging \$120 million towards covering a budget deficit of \$58 million, World Bank Vice-President Caio Koch-Weser said in a statement.

"It doesn't look as if we have been able to get all that we needed to achieve a balanced budget... but I am quite satisfied," Palestinian delegation head Nabil Kassis said.

Much of the money was earmarked for the Palestinian police force that will take charge of local security once Israeli troops withdraw under the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement still to be implemented.

Funds will also go towards central administration, the rehabilitation of prisoners released by Israel and job creation.

Western donors normally insist that aid go to specific agreed projects rather than recurrent government expenditure but some were prepared to make an exception for the nascent Palestinian administration, which will initially have very limited tax revenues.

Altogether donors have pledged \$570 million in aid for 1994, most of it for basic infrastructure projects such as roads, water, sewage, electricity, hospital and school building.

An international conference on financial support for Middle East peace in Washington last October raised promises of \$2.4 billion over five years.

The donors — including the European Union, the United States, Japan and some Arab countries — also agreed to the broad outlines of expenditures and receipts contained in the first Palestinian budget, developed by the Palestinian Economic Council for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank announced.

The consultative group, grouping 24 countries and five international institutions, was

supposed to cover the entire budget deficit.

The donors' meeting was held Thursday and Friday at the World Bank's European headquarters in Paris.

Mr. Kassis, a board member of the Palestinian economic council, said the Palestinians would be ready to implement economic self-rule as soon as the PLO and Israel achieved a breakthrough on political and security aspects of interim self-government.

The European Union pledged the largest single contribution to first year running costs with \$36 million. Japan pledged \$17.1 million and the United States \$16 million, of which \$6 million was earmarked for security expenditure, officials said.

World Bank officials said further pledges may yet be made to narrow the shortfall, which could also be bridged by transferring some running costs to project budgets.

To help some donors bypass their own rules which stipulate that aid may only be donated

(Continued on page 5)

Rabin emphatic on Golan referendum

PARIS (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in an interview published Friday he would definitely go ahead with a referendum on a peace accord with Syria involving withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"Without any doubt," Mr. Rabin told the French daily Liberation when asked whether he had taken a final decision on his recent proposal to hold such a referendum, which has drawn criticism from within his own cabinet.

"The question of peace or no peace with Syria is a crucial one just like the issue of a major withdrawal from the Golan."

The Golan Heights, seized by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, are at the core of Middle East peace negotiations.

Syrian troops came within a whisker of retaking the bleak plateau in 1973. Israel has always feared a surprise attack on its positions overlooking the road to Damascus.

U.N. soldiers stand between the rival forces in the area, barely an hour's drive from Syria's capital.

Dominated from the north by Jabal Al Sheikh the rocky plateau ends abruptly to the west in a sheer cliff overlooking the upper Jordan River.

"There can be no misunderstanding or arguing (later) on this and it is best to let the Israeli people decide. All stable democracies organise referendum on major subjects so why should Israel not organise one on a subject vital for its security and prosperity," he said.

Mr. Rabin said that, before proceeding, Israel needed "clear signs as to what peace means for Syria, what the territorial price to pay will be, security arrangements, the calendar for Israeli withdrawal and links between peace and withdrawal."

Syria is demanding a prior Israeli commitment to withdraw fully from Golan while Israel refuses to discuss withdrawal until it receives a Syrian pledge to conclude full and normal relations after a peace agreement.

Mr. Rabin said there was no need for the referendum to concern fronts other than Syria because "peace with Syria and the loss of most of the Golan are much more important than peace with Lebanon or Jordan where there are no territorial

issues... As for Palestinian autonomy, I believe I already have a mandate from the electorate," he said.

Mr. Rabin said his main difference with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was that he "considers, and from his point of view it is entirely understandable, that the first phase of the Gaza-Jericho accord is a first step towards an independent Palestinian state."

Mr. Rabin said the accord stipulated talks on the final status of the occupied areas would only start at a later date.

A mock referendum run by an Israeli daily showed over 70 per cent of Israelis oppose a total withdrawal from the Golan Heights, even in exchange for peace with Syria. Maariv said 52,000 Israelis took part in its referendum last Friday, when ballot boxes were placed at newsstands throughout the country.

Respondents slipped in ballots answering Maariv's question, "are you for or against a full peace treaty with Syria in return for a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights?"

Out of those polled, 71.84 per cent said they were against and 14,689 said they were in favour.

Maariv acknowledged that the referendum was not a precise reflection of Israeli public opinion, as it reflected only its readership. Arab Israelis, for instance, are not readers of the paper.

Polls have shown that over 60 per cent of Israelis oppose total withdrawal for total peace. But similar numbers are for some sort of withdrawal for peace.

Most Israelis unhappy
Most Israelis are dissatisfied with the way their government is negotiating with the Palestinians and Syrians, according to an opinion survey published in the Yediot Aharonot daily here Friday.

Of 581 people questioned in the survey, 56 per cent were "dissatisfied" with the way the autonomy talks with the Palestinians were being conducted, against 44 per cent in favour and one per cent undecided.

On the discussions with Syria, 52 per cent said they were dissatisfied, while 45 per cent expressed satisfaction and three per cent were undecided.

The poll was carried out Tuesday and Wednesday by the Dahaf institute.



TEAM IN SOUTH AFRICA: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Tzvi Tzvi, a member of a high-level team headed by Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi (centre) now visiting South Africa (see page 3), talks to reporters in Johannesburg after meeting with African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela (left) at this office (AFP photo)

Israeli army disperses extremist settlers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — A group of extremist Israelis attempted for a second time Thursday to set up an unauthorised settlement in the West Bank as part of a campaign to bring the government down.

The army dispersed several dozen settlers from an encampment near settlement of Bat Ayin in the Etzion bloc south of Jerusalem peacefully, Israel Radio reported.

The first attempt by "This is Our Land" to surreptitiously set up a settlement in an abandoned Arab house near the West Bank town of Hebron on Wednesday night ended when troops arrested 40 settlers in that action, dragging some hand and foot.

The area is a frequent source of clashes between religious extremists from both sides.

Thursday's attempt was, by contrast, held in the open. The would-be settlers dispersed quietly when the army arrived

on the scene, the radio said. The group, "This is Our Land," opposes the government's negotiations with the Palestinians to set up autonomous regions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and advocates the mass transfer of Palestinians out of the occupied lands.

Earlier Thursday, a Jerusalem court ordered 23 of settlers arrested in the Hebron attempt retained in custody for 48 hours after they orders to stay out of closed areas.

Attorney Naphtali Weisberger said the settlers, most of whom he said had no prior arrests, were refusing to be fingerprinted and photographed "like criminals" for protesting government policy in the occupied territories.

Nine were released after agreeing to be fingerprinted and photographed, and the court released eight of the ones that remained after they agreed to sign a pledge to obey

future orders to stay out of closed areas in the occupied lands, radios said.

It was the first forced evacuation of settlers since the Sept. 13 accord promising Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank area of Jericho.

The group behind the group, "This is Our Land," opposes any form of Palestinian sovereignty. The movement, which advocates expelling Palestinians from the occupied lands, is opposed by mainstream settlers.

Mr. Weisberger maintained those arrested "are loyal citizens of Israel and to treat them like criminals because of a legitimate protest, asking for fingerprints and photographs, (is) humiliating."

The group aims to embarrass the government through forcing arrests. Any new settlement would upset the fragile Israel-Palestinian talks to introduce Palestinian self-rule.

Israel lotto prize shared by family, friends

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's record \$7.34 million jackpot would be shared among a family deep in debt, three friends from Tel Aviv and a high school student who has locked himself in his room ever since he discovered he was a millionaire.

The Israel state lottery said a couple from the coastal town of Ashdod had come forth Thursday to claim their third of the 22 million shekel (\$7.34 million) prize, which was drawn Tuesday.

The woman, 34, had filled in the 12 shekel (\$4) 10 game lotto form every week for 11 years with birthdays and other important dates, a press release from the state lottery said.

She told officials she woke up at 4 a.m. with a "good feeling" and checked her numbers. The couple, who are parents to a 10-year-old girl, said they would use the money to pay off debts and help out relatives. They have not told their daughter of the win yet.

Three men from Tel Aviv who have filled out a higher-stakes ticket with the same numbers for several years were the next to appear at the state lottery offices in Tel Aviv.

The men each chip in to buy a 252 shekels (\$84) one-game form each week, the state lottery press release said. The form allows players to choose ten numbers out of 49, instead of the standard six, increasing the players' odds.

One of the three partners was a pensioner who said he would use the money to buy his children apartments.

Israel's Channel 2 television said the third winner, a 16-year-old boy from Jerusalem, had not yet cashed in his ticket. He had holed himself up in his room since winning, the report said.

Somalis attack U.N. convoys in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AP) — In the first reported attack on U.N. soldiers in several months, Somalia militiamen opened fire on a convoy, seriously injuring one soldier, the United Nations said Friday.

The soldiers, from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), returned fire as their three vehicles passed through the Medina area of Mogadishu on Thursday afternoon, but no Somali militiamen were injured. Major Chris Budge, a U.N. military spokesman, told reporters.

In another attack Thursday night, a group of Somali teenagers threw rocks at a convoy of U.S. soldiers driving out of the U.N. headquarters in the capital and tried to climb aboard the vehicles. When one windshield was smashed, the troops fired warning shots, and that may have left one of the boys with a wounded leg, said Colonel Steve Rausch, a U.S. military spokesman.

The United Nations described the attack on the UAE soldiers as the first such assault on U.N. forces in about three months. But an American soldier who will be leaving Somalia soon said on condition of anonymity Friday that Somalia had opened fire on him three times in the last month in Mogadishu.

The militias that control the divided capital killed dozens of Pakistani and U.S. soldiers last year during heavy clashes that broke out when U.N. forces tried to arrest warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed. But the city has been calmer since the United Nations lifted the arrest warrant on Nov. 16 and began negotiating again with Gen. Aideed and other political factions.

U.S. forces — whose ships, helicopters and howitzers are the backbone of the U.N. operation that ended Somalia's famine — will complete their withdrawal by March 31, leaving the remaining U.N. soldiers and relief workers far more vulnerable to Somali attacks.

Although a "populist" peace movement has begun in Mogadishu in the last few weeks, the militias in the capital are taking over positions being abandoned by the reorganising U.N. forces and reportedly rearming themselves.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.N. envoy holds Cyprus talks in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — U.N. envoy Joe Clark met Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin in Istanbul on Friday for talks aimed at reviving stalled Cyprus peace talks, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. Mr. Clark, who arrived from Athens on Thursday night, was due to fly to Ankara later for further talks with Foreign Ministry officials, spokesman Ferhat Ataman said. In the past week Mr. Clark has held talks with Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders in Nicosia and Greek officials in Athens. He is trying to find out whether the two sides are ready to accept, at least in principle, U.N.-proposed measures to build confidence ahead of a permanent settlement. The measures include reopening the deserted, Turkish-held resort of Varosha and Nicosia international airport under U.N. control as first steps towards a federal coexistence.

Court rejects equality for Jewish women at wall

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's supreme court has rejected an appeal by Jewish women to join men at Jerusalem's western wall in praying aloud, reading from the Torah scroll and wearing prayer shawls. Orthodox ritual law stipulated only men can engage in such activities. Chief Justice Meir Shamgar recommended that the government set up a committee to see if women could be allowed to carry out those rituals without offending other worshippers, court officials said. Women pray in a separate section at the wall in accordance with orthodox tradition. Their arms and legs must be covered. They may not read from the Torah and must keep their voices down so as not to disturb the men. The orthodox stream, backed by religious political parties whose support has been crucial to Israeli coalition governments, has an exclusive grip on religious services such as marriage, divorce and burials. But in a separate ruling the court gave non-orthodox Jews seeking to reform the religious establishment in Israel an important victory. It ruled on Wednesday that the Jerusalem and Tel Aviv municipalities could no longer disqualify representatives of the conservative and reform streams of Judaism from sitting on religious councils that oversee provision that the disqualification of candidates because of their personal outlook was "discriminatory and betrays the principle of equality."

Israel denies reports of reactor leak

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel has denied reports from Egypt of a leak from its nuclear reactor at Dimona in the desert. The Egyptian army sent investigators to Egypt's border with Israel to measure radiation levels, security sources said. "Environmental Minister Yossi Sarid wishes to clarify that there is no truth to rumours emanating from Egypt that there is leakage from the nuclear reactor in Dimona," a statement from the Israeli ministry said. "The Dimona reactor is one of the safest in the world and possesses the most advanced safety and maintenance systems available," it continued. "Mr. Sarid invites Egyptian officials to visit Dimona, the city closest to the reactor, where they can personally verify that their concerns are unfounded."

Israel to buy F-15s from McDonnell

ST. LOUIS (AP) — McDonnell Douglas Corp. said Thursday that a \$2 billion contract from Israel for F-15 fighter-bombers could mean the addition of jobs at the defence contractor, which has been hard hit by Pentagon cutbacks. The company currently employs about 5,000 workers in St. Louis who build F-15s. Israel said Thursday it would buy 20 F-15s aircraft, also known as the F-15 Eagle, with an option to buy five more at a later date. McDonnell Douglas spokesman Lee Whitney said the number of workers on the F-15 line may increase substantially, thanks to the deal with Israel and another contract to manufacture 72 F-15s for Saudi Arabia. "What we anticipate is the Saudi and Israeli orders combined will create additional work that could increase to about 7,000 the number of people associated with the F-15 programme," he said. But, Mr. Whitney said, not all of those will be new workers. Some of them may come from other programme within the company. The F-15 Eagle is a dual-role tactical fighter aircraft that can fly in good or inclement weather. It is equipped with infrared capabilities that allow for nighttime flying. The U.S. Air Force ordered 392 F-15 Eagles in the mid-1980s, but scaled back the request to 200 in 1991.

Gunmen attack U.S. diplomat in Ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA (R) — A U.S. diplomat escaped unhurt when unidentified gunmen fired on him as he drove towards the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, police said Friday. The diplomat was driving from the U.S. Agency for International Development office near Addis Ababa's main airport towards the city centre when three gunmen in a car intercepted him on Wednesday. Police said the gunman in a four-wheel-drive vehicle pulled alongside the diplomat's vehicle and two of three shots fired through the driver's door but missed the American. Police were searching for the gunman's white Toyota Land Cruiser with diplomatic licence plates and crash marks almost identical to the diplomat's vehicle. They appealed for help from the public. A U.S. diplomat said the incident was a great surprise as it was the first such attack on a U.S. diplomat in Addis Ababa.

3 French held hostage in Yemen

SANAA (AFP) — Tribesmen have kidnapped three French tourists in a bid to force the Yemeni government to build a road through their region, Yemeni sources and French officials said Friday. The three were abducted on Sunday in Hajja province, 200 kilometres northwest of the capital Sanaa, while on a tour organised by the French firm Terre d'Aventure (land of adventure), Yemeni sources said. Abnour tribesmen were holding Henri Heslot and his wife, both retired agriculture professors, as well as cardiologist Brigitte Fontaine, 42, to press the government into building a road through their region.

Mixed signals — extremists 'foreign forces' or troubled Egyptians?

By William C. Mann
The Associated Press

CAIRO — President Hosni Mubarak tells black-scarved widows and other survivors of 29 policemen that the killers of their loved ones serve "foreign forces who don't want progress for Egypt."

But in a magazine interview Mr. Mubarak's top policeman, Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfay, says just the opposite: the wave of Muslim radicalism troubling Egypt.

"Why are we looking for other governments and other countries to blame?" Gen. Alfay asks. "All the actors are of our people."

No wonder that after two years and almost 300 deaths, Egyptians still have a hard time coming to grips with the realisation that other Egyptians are responsible.

Most Egyptian's strong Islamic beliefs raise doubts that

their countrymen could do such things. Then, their leaders keep sending mixed signals — with the foreign conspiracy theory avoiding accusations that Egypt's own deep-seated problems are partly to blame.

Since early 1992 when the extremists escalated a campaign for strict Islamic rule in Egypt, officials have offered a profusion of ideas about who the gunmen and bombers are and who sent them:

— Subversives trained in Afghanistan, financed and guided by Islamic fundamentalist regimes in Iran and Sudan.

— Afghan-trained terrorists bankrolled by Saudi Arabian financiers.

— Mercenaries in the hire of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency.

— Even saboteurs of the

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) or other Western intelligence agencies, aiming to discredit Islam.

But there seems no doubt the extremists are indeed Egyptians. Palestinians are thought to be the only non-Egyptians. One of those was among 29 men hanged so far.

The one curious but consistent thread in each version was and remains that the radicals have nothing to do with Islam. And as if to prove its Islamic credentials, the government has banned books and television shows, on religious grounds, brought more religious programming to television and radio, begun restoring a 150-year-old law restricting church construction and repairs.

Critics say the government's pushing of Islam is only encouraging the extremists. Through such activities, "the state is primarily responsible

for the social phenomenon of religious extremism and fanaticism," the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights said in its overview of 1993's Egypt.

"I don't think there is any conspiracy whatsoever behind the fundamentalist terrorists," Islamic scholar Hussein Amin, a retired Egyptian ambassador, told the Associated Press.

"Maybe the government... would like to point a finger at Iran or Sudan, etc., but I think it is completely an internal matter."

Mr. Amin can claim firsthand knowledge. As ambassador to Algeria from 1987 to 1990, he watched the rise of the extremist Islamic movement there long before serious problems developed in Egypt. He says his reports to Cairo told of the gathering storm and warned that its causes — poverty, lethargy, corruption — must be addressed in Egypt to prevent its spread.

His advice was ignored, Mr. Amin said.

As a matter of fact, he said, the government failed to act because it believed "a little terrorism was good for it, served its purposes, by frightening intellectuals and Copts (Christians) to support it at a time when it had lost its legitimacy."

Mr. Amin recalled that security forces did not intercede strongly against extremist attacks until late 1992, when strikes against foreign tourists began to bite into Egypt's most lucrative industry, tourism. Until then, Coptic Christians and low-ranking police were the most frequent targets.

The government's main tactic so far has been to meet force with greater force, ignoring advice from critics that the causes should be treated, not the symptoms.

To analysts like Mr. Amin, it's obvious that the willingness

of so many young men to risk the hangman's noose to change the government indicate a significant level of disenchantment.

"If one has to find a single cause of the fundamentalist threat, it is widespread corruption within Egypt and the failure of the government to deal strongly with social and economic problems," Mr. Amin said.

Naguib Mahfouz, Nobel Prize-winning writer and social critic, agreed in a recent newspaper column that many of Egypt's woes result from despair among young men.

Whether caused by unemployment, poor schools, slums, salaries too low for a decent life or "the system," Mr. Mahfouz wrote, despair is "an innumerable crimes and evils."

"Let us combat despair wherever it is to be found — for as we sow, so shall we reap."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30	Les Aventuriers De L'Espace
17:41	L'Ecole Des Fais
18:30	Beaumont
19:00	News in French
19:15	Ushuaia
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The Fanchi Boys
21:00	The Talk Show
21:30	The Campbells
22:00	News in English
22:20	Feature Film: "Sacred Ground"

PRAYER TIMES

05:08	Fajr
06:30	Sunrise (Sunrise) Duha
11:48	Dhuhr
14:43	Asr
17:08	Maghreb
18:28	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637285
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637430
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 623466

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 644195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 823824, 644932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will drop with rain falling in most parts of the Kingdom and clouds building up, while winds will be southeasterly active. In Amman, it will be partly cloudy with occasional showers. Winds will be southerly active and seas rough.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 5 / 12

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Agaba 6 / 18	Dr. Ahmad Al Tanfi 908006	Electric Power 636381	AGABA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111
Deserts 4 / 13	Khalil pharmacy 905417	RJ Flight Information 08-53200	Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 08-53200
Jordan Valley 10 / 18			

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:	
Dr. Yousef Al Faqih	750988
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh	895880
Dr. Ghazi Abu Shikah	752405
Dr. Basim Oudumi	648633
Firas pharmacy	661912
Fordway pharmacy	778336
Al Asena pharmacy	637055
Nairoukh pharmacy	626762
Al Salam pharmacy	636736
Yaacoub pharmacy	644945
Shumciani pharmacy	637641
Najibi pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Mohammad Al Zu'bi	(-)
Al Oud Pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence assistance	630341
Rescue	199
Civil Defence Emergency	192, 621111, 637777
First Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	643402
Traffic Police	896380
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	609800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	767111
Amman Municipality	121
Telephone Information	010230
Director (directory assistance)	623101
Overseas Calls	661101
Central Amman Telephone	773111
Repairs	680100
Abdali Telephone Repairs	774111
Jordan Television	680100
Radio Jordan	680100
Water Authority	815615
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615

EMERGENCIES

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:	
Hussain Medical Centre	812813/2
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	642416
Jabal Amman Maternity	642416
Mulhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	6641714
Shmeisani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	848845
Al-Mushar Hospital	6672779
The Islamic, Abdali	666127/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6641646
Al-Muhajreen	891611/5
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	775111/28
Army, Marka	891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/50
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)980732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)989900
IRBID:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272775
Ibn Al Nafces Hospital	(02)247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:30	Agaba (RJ)
06:25	New Ochi (RJ)
06:30	Agaba (RJ)
06:30	Dubai (RJ)
06:30	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
06:30	Bahrain (RJ)
06:30	Colombo (RJ)
06:30	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
06:30	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
06:30	Cairo (RJ)
06:30	Croatia, Zagreb (RJ)
06:30	London, Berlin (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00	Beirut (RJ)
07:00	Agaba (RJ)
07:00	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
07:00	Paris, Brussels (RJ)
07:00	Cauliflower (RJ)
07:00	Cumcurns (large)
07:00	Cumcurns (small)
07:00	Eggplant
07:00	Garlic
07:00	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
07:00	Jeddah (RJ)
07:00	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
07:00	Damascus, Larnaca (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20	Vienna (OA)
04:30	Sanaa (YY)
04:30	Rome (AZ)
04:30	Dubai (EM)
04:30	Paris, Damascus (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	720/450
Banana (Mukammal)	680
Cabbage	60 / 30
Carrot	180 / 100
Cauliflower	100 / 150
Clementine	230 / 250
Cumcurns (large)	100 / 30
Cumcurns (small)	220 / 160
Eggplant	160 / 60
Garlic	

Two hanged for murder

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two convicted criminals, Sufan Shtawi and Ali Qaftan, were hanged at Swaga Prison.

The criminal court had condemned the two men to death for the murder of a fellow Egyptian worker in April 1992 in Irbid governorate.

The two prisoners, aged 26 and 28, were said to have been working as construction labourers in Makhraha near Irbid together with the victim, identified only as Shaker.

According to a report in the local press Friday, Shtawi and Qaftan had lured Shaker to an olive orchard 400 metres away from the main road near Samana on the pretence of wanting to discuss the construction of a home there.

Arriving at the scene, the two men attacked Shaker with sticks and a knife and later strangled him with scarf which he was wearing at the time.

According to the report, Shtawi and Qaftan stole their victims' wallet and shared its contents of \$1,300, JD 40 and an unspecified amount of Egyptian currency. They left Shaker's body under an olive tree, the report said.

It said that soon after discovery of the body, police started wide scale investigations to find the murderers.

In investigating a robbery later at a school in Makhraha, police found fingerprints matching those found on the murder victim's body and this led to the arrest of Shtawi and Qaftan, said the report.

It said that the two men admitted to killing their colleague and reenacted the crime at the scene in the presence of the prosecutor-general and local police officers.

The two hangings, carried out during the earlier hours Thursday, are the first executions in Jordan in 1994.

S. Africa welcomes opening of Jordanian embassy

JOHANNESBURG (Petra) — South African President F. W. de Klerk has welcomed Jordan's decision to open an embassy in South Africa and pledged to facilitate establishment of strong ties between the two countries.

Mr. de Klerk was speaking at a meeting here Thursday with a Jordanian delegation led by Speaker of the Senate Ahmad Al Lawzi who conveyed a message from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan inviting him to visit Jordan.

Mr. Lawzi, who is leading a 15-member delegation including Minister of Planning Ziad Fariz and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, presented Jordan's views about the Middle East situation and outlined prospects for Jordanian-South African economic cooperation.

Members of the delegation, who include businessmen and representatives of Jordanian universities, discussed trade and cultural relations at separate meetings with South African officials, including prospects for teaching Islamic studies to South African students at the Jordan University of Science and Technology and AL at Bayt University.

Dr. Fariz met with the head, and members of the South Africa Chamber of Commerce and Industry to discuss trade prospects.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Upper House to discuss report on budget

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament will hold a meeting (today) Saturday under the chairmanship of Acting Speaker Zeid Rifai and in the presence of the Cabinet members. The House will discuss a report prepared by its Financial Committee on the general budget draft law which was approved by the Lower House recently.

Spain donates \$184,000 to rural programme

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Mohammad Sgour received a cheque in the amount of \$184,000 as donation from the Spanish government to the Rural Families Income Support Programme. The cheque was handed to Dr. Sgour Thursday by Spanish Ambassador to Jordan Juan Manuel Cabrera. Dr. Sgour said the Rural Families Income Support Programme aims to improve the economic, social and health conditions of rural families and prevent migration from rural to urban areas. He said the areas which will benefit from the project are Zizia, Arida, Birein, North Shoubeh, Rujm Al Siba Al Shamali, Hoshia, Hmimah, Abu Mahtoub, Mazhar, Ghor Hadith, Juff Al Darawish and Gharandal.

JNRCS holds annual meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The Central General Assembly of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) held its annual meeting under the chairmanship of JNRCS President Mohammad Miteq Al Hadid. Dr. Hadid reviewed at the meeting held Thursday the most prominent achievements of the society in 1993. He said the society has expanded its hospital, increasing its capacity to 150 beds. He also reviewed JNRCS's role in extending assistance to other societies, saying this enabled the society's president to win the post of vice president of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in an election held in Birmingham, Great Britain last November. Participants in the meeting discussed the society's 1993 financial statement and its 1994 budget. They also discussed a report submitted by the secretary general of the JNRCS recommending amendments to the society's bylaws. The general assembly decided to hold another meeting at a date yet to be decided.

Islamic relief agency urges Arab solidarity

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of the International Islamic Relief Organisation's office in Amman Mu'ayad Al Battiri Friday underlined the importance of enhancing social solidarity among Arab and Islamic peoples. Sheikh Battiri told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that Jordanian-Saudi relations are distinguished for their mutual respect and brotherly ties, adding that as a reflection of these relations the Jeddah-based organisation has one of its major offices in Amman which constitutes a link between the organisation's offices in the world.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by artist Ghazwa Shukri at the New English School Art Gallery 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.).
- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian artist Yasser Hammoud at Baladna Art Gallery (Wasfi Al Tal Street).
- ★ Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Fuman of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Makram Khaghandoqah at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Omar Al Basoul at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition on the art of architecture at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

DRAMAS

- ★ Drama in Arabic entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre (11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.).

IATA, Jordan discuss air transport issues Prospects of Palestinian airline reviewed with PLO

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) discussed enhancing cooperation with a view to building and consolidating relations between countries and expanding prospects for tourism during a visit last week by IATA Director Pierre Jeannot, senior officials said Friday.

Mr. Jeannot, who ended a two-day visit to Amman Thursday after a meeting with Acting Prime Minister Ma'an Abu Nowar, also met with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials and discussed Palestinian plans to build airports in areas expected to come under Palestinian autonomy and set up an airline.

Dr. Abu Nowar said he and Mr. Jeannot reviewed ties between Jordan and the Geneva-based IATA and focused on issues related to regional and international aviation, "which

has suffered all over the world in the past years as a result of instability and strife."

Dr. Abu Nowar noted that aviation was a topic of "very special interest to His Majesty King Hussein," who pilots his own plane, and the talks with Mr. Jeannot came within the context of the King's "continued dialogue with many others in the world" about cooperation in aviation affairs.

The deputy prime minister said the issue of an Israeli offer to open its airspace for Royal Jordanian, the national carrier, was not discussed at all.

Jordan has denied an Israeli report that it had sought permission for overflights through Israeli airspace. Officials have said that the issue of overflights in general was discussed during the peace negotiations, but Jordan had not specifically requested anything from Israel.

"Israel is ready to allow Jordan to use its sea and air-

ports," said a statement issued Monday by Israeli Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar's office after the Israeli minister's talks with Mr. Jeannot. "Israel has told Jordan it will be allowed to fly over Israel to European points on the basis of mutuality between the two countries."

Israel is anxious to have access to Jordanian as well as Gulf airspace to facilitate El Al's (the Israeli national carrier) new flights to Bombay and Bangkok ahead of operating flights to other Far Eastern countries, including Japan.

Dr. Abu Nowar as well as other officials noted that aviation links were part of the multilateral phase of the Arab-Israeli peace process and could be followed up only after a basic agreement has been reached on the political aspects of the conflict.

Mr. Jeannot, who met with RJ Chief Executive Officer and President Mahmoud Balqez and other RJ officials, told

the Jordan Times that his impression was that although Jordan welcomes aviation links with all countries it would not consider any ties with Israel without reaching a Middle East peace settlement.

Mr. Jeannot, who had also met with senior El Al officials before arriving here Wednesday, said: "There is obviously a political process that has to precede any accord on aviation."

As head of IATA, he said, his concern was to help airlines facilitate their operations. In the case of the Middle East, he said, international airlines could also benefit from the opening of airspaces.

"We need as many airlines as possible in view of the increase in air traffic," he said, but added that IATA was not acting as a go-between or mediator in the Middle East.

Mr. Jeannot told Mr. Balqez that Israeli officials had told him that they were ready

to open Israeli skies for RJ, and Mr. Balqez reiterated the Jordanian stand, officials said.

During Wednesday's talks, RJ proposed that IATA move its Middle East Technical Centre to Amman and also called for enhanced ties between the carrier and the organisation in terms of training and related areas. Mr. Jeannot promised to study the proposal.

Mr. Jeannot voiced "high appreciation for RJ's contributions to the IATA," said an official, noting that the Canadian official had presented RJ with a special certificate of appreciation.

Mr. Jeannot, who had lunch with PLO officials Wednesday afternoon, said the focus of those discussions was PLO plans to build airports in Gaza and Jericho, where Palestinian autonomy is expected to begin in April, and establish an airline. No PLO official was immediately available for comment.

The IATA chief noted that it was not simple to set up an airline since the issue involves traffic rights and international agreements which are concluded among independent sovereign states.

But the very fact that he discussed the issue with PLO officials was taken as an indication that Israel was not ruling out a Palestinian airline. The PLO is known to be pressing Israel for permission to operate an independent airline and build airports in Gaza as well as Jericho.

At the same time, airline sources said, it also appeared that any such Israeli permission would be with a clear eye on linking a Palestinian airline with El Al and El Al's traffic rights since the PLO could not enter any agreement as an independent entity.

"That would be another stone in Israel's effort to bind the Palestinians to itself as much as possible," said an airline industry official.

Police continue probe into downtown cinema blast IAF condemns incident, blames 'Zionists, enemy groups'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Security authorities kept a tight lid Friday over their investigations into Wednesday's blast at a downtown cinema screening semi-pornographic movies. But informed sources said it was established that a bomb was behind the explosion that injured seven people and caused severe damages.

No arrest of suspects was confirmed, but the sources said several people were questioned. The Islamic Action Front's (IAF) parliamentary bloc meanwhile condemned the incident and blamed "Zionists" and

enemy groups" for it. The IAF suggested the Israeli Mossad could have been behind the blast and said violence was not the means to prevent anyone from actions incompatible with Islamic teachings.

One of the injured, reported earlier in serious condition, was pronounced out of danger Thursday evening.

The six other sustained injuries but not life-threatening, medical sources said. Some of the injured were admitted to Al Bashir Hospital while others were taken to the Italian Hospital.

Two of the injured were Jordanian, three were Egyptian

and one was Sudanese. Another was unidentified.

Police spokesmen would only say that investigations were continuing and declined to confirm or deny whether any of the people questioned was a suspect in the case, the first of its kind reported in Jordan.

An informed source said "it is almost certain that a bomb had caused the explosion," but declined to reveal any details of the nature of the device, which wrecked the projection room and damaged the ceiling and chairs in the auditorium.

The explosion came in the middle of a regular matinee show of a Turkish movie de-

scribed as semi-pornographic. Jordanian censorship laws ban such films. But there are a few theatres, including the Rivoli where Wednesday's blast occurred, in Amman and other cities in Jordan that screen such movies in violation of the laws.

In a statement issued in the name of the 16-strong IAF bloc in the 80-seat Lower House, Amman Deputy Hameed Hanzeh Mansour condemned the blast at the Rivoli and said such actions were not the right way to address the issue of theatres showing banned films.

Expressing "dismay" at the Rivoli incident, the statement

said the IAF deputies in Parliament "denounced this despicable act which targeted innocent citizens and infringing upon the security of our dear homeland."

Such actions, it said, could only be carried out by "enemy groups," and pointed an accusing finger at Israel's infamous Mossad secret services.

"Investigations in Egypt have showed that Mossad is behind some of the practices that targeted the lives of innocents or national objectives," said the statement, referring to extremism, including attacks on cinemas, plaguing Egypt since last 1992.

"The IAF deputies call on the Public Security Department to keep a watchful eye on our national security and urge our citizens to be very cautious and conscientious and have self-control so as not to let our enemy use any chance to infiltrate (our society) to achieve his evil purposes," said the statement.

"Correcting the status of cinemas in the country cannot be done through this condemned act that threatens the country and the citizens, but through raising public awareness and activating legislation and censorship on what cinemas and other media means are broadcast," the statement added.

Jordan pushes ahead in Dead Sea mineral projects

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordan has set up a \$85 million holding company to oversee \$350 million worth of projects to exploit its Dead Sea mineral wealth, industry officials said on Thursday.

The public shareholding company, Jordan Industrial Chemicals of the Dead Sea Minerals Company, is jointly owned by the Jordan Investment Corporation, Arab Potash Company, Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and a consortium of Jordanian banks.

"Jordan is giving implementation of these projects priority, and the setting up of a holding company is to step up exploitation of the Dead Sea's resources and wealth," said Suleiman Al Hawari, general manager of the Arab Potash Company and head of the committee of founders of the new holding company.

It is to establish companies and acquire majority shareholdings in companies and projects involved in extracting the billions of tonnes of mineral reserves on Jordan's side of the Dead Sea.

Mr. Hawari told Reuters the holding company will acquire plants already planned to extract non-potash minerals by the Arab Potash Company, the country's major producer.

He said Israel had better exploited its Dead Sea minerals because it began in the 1950s. However, Jordan's annual capacity of around 1.8 million tonnes of potash was catching up with Israel's 2.2 million tonnes.

"We have advanced in potash exploitation, but have been slow in extracting our non-potash mineral wealth," Mr. Hawari said.

The holding company will focus on three minerals considered most economically feasible — bromine, magnesium oxide and potassium sulphate — all at the core of a long-planned Dead Sea Chemical complex.

Jordan has been promoting downstream investment in the fertiliser industry to optimise benefits of the mineral-rich Dead Sea.

The U.S.-based Ethyl Corporation this month signed a memorandum of understanding for a 49 per cent share in a

\$145 million 50,000 tonne-capacity bromine plant to open at the end of 1997, Mr. Hawari said.

The joint venture agreement will be finalised in the first half of the year, with both partners securing capital costs with loans equal to their shareholding in the project, he said.

Mr. Hawari said the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC), Jordan's consultants in negotiations with Ethyl, was willing to provide a loan for the bromine project.

A second project is a \$120 million magnesium oxide plant with an annual capacity of 50,000 tonnes, also to be set up in the Ghor Al Safi area. A \$1 million pilot plant being built by an Austrian consultant is expected to be commissioned in March.

The French consulting firm Sofreco will soon sign a letter of intent for a final feasibility study and tender documentation for a \$170 million potassium sulphate plant with an annual production of 75,000 tonnes of animal fodder and 50,000 tonnes of dicalcium phosphate. It is to be operational in two years, Mr. Hawari said.

Bids for a \$15 million industrial salt plant to produce 1.2 million tonnes of annual exports are under evaluation.

Iraqi-Jordanian company records \$3m profit, plans major purchase

AMMAN (J.T.) — Despite international sanctions against Iraq the Iraqi-Jordanian Land Transport Company (IJLTC) registered a \$3 million profit for 1993 and has decided to add 100 trucks to its present fleet of 420.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Transport Minister Aqab Halasa Friday said that at its meeting in Baghdad, the company also "reviewed plans for activating operations once the sanctions against Iraq are lifted."

The company, jointly owned by the Baghdad and Amman governments, had forecast a \$10 million profit for 1993 in a board meeting held last May.

There was no official explanation for the reduced profit, reported Reuters.

But it was believed to be a result of reduced Iraqi trade through Jordan due to the

Kingdom's compliance with the sanctions. Iraq's introduction of strict trade and monetary regulations and the thorough inspection of cargo vessels bound for Aqaba.

Mr. Halasa's comments were made in Baghdad at the end of a four-day annual board meeting, co-chaired by Mr. Halasa and his Iraqi counterpart Ahmad Mortada.

According to Petra the board also decided that plans for 1994 should include the prospect of operating its trucks outside Jordanian and Iraqi territory.

The company, which oversees freight between both countries, was established in 1981 with a capital of \$50 million.

Mr. Halasa, who returned to Amman Friday, said that \$8 million has been allocated for the purchase of the new trucks,

but he declined to say when the purchase would be made.

He said the company discussed plans for operating a weekly flight between Amman and Baghdad to carry sailing Iraqis who cannot afford the 1000-kilometre overland trip between the two countries.

"We discussed all the measures that should be adopted once the United Nations approves Iraq's request for a weekly flight between both countries that was submitted two months ago," Mr. Halasa told Petra.

The agency also quoted an Iraqi official as saying that Iraq will continue to use Aqaba for its imports despite the reopening of Umm Qasr Port in the Gulf in November.

Jordan was concerned that Iraqi imports through Aqaba could diminish because of the reopening of Umm Qasr.

Awqaf sets new criteria for pilgrims to Mecca

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has formulated new criteria for registering people wishing to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Under the new criteria those persons born in or before 1935 will be allowed to perform the pilgrimage this year.

In case the number of those

who registered is less than the number allowed by the Saudi Arabian authorities, applications will be invited from those born in 1936 or after, according to Minister Abdul Salam Al Abbadi.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Abbadi said the number of people who registered for pil-

grimage this year and in 1993 has more than tripled, thus giving the ministry no choice but to curtail the number in line with the quota prescribed by the Saudi authorities.

Dr. Abbadi noted that those quotas have been agreed upon at a meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs of the Islamic countries.

NOTICE OF SALE

Date: Sunday, January 30, 1994, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Location: American Embassy warehouse near 7th Circle

Items to be sold: Used residential furnishing and other miscellaneous items.

Type of sale: Sealed-bid. Bid forms can be obtained on the day of sale.

Conditions of sale:

- 20 per cent cash deposit required on sale day.
- Sale items will be available for inspection on sale day.
- Bids must be submitted by 3 p.m. on sale day.
- Bids must be submitted at the American Embassy warehouse.
- Bids will be opened and bidders notified beginning Monday, January 31, 1994.
- Items must be removed within 24 hours after notification. After that period, a JD 50 per day storage fee will be assessed.
- All items are sold on a "where-is, as-is, non-returnable" basis.

UNRWA Headquarters in Wadi Seer (Bayader) is looking to recruit as soon as possible

A. Personnel & General Services Officer (14)
to provide professional support through administration of local staff entitlements and of administrative contractual services including the budget and expenditure control. He or she will assist in supervising the administrative services at UHB (Amman).
Candidates must have a university degree in personnel or public administration and have professional training and at least 8 years experience in personnel work or management. Very good English and Arabic are essential.

B. Finance and Administration Clerk (08)
to assist the coordinator with finance and administrative work involving contacts with banks, contractors and local authorities as well as foreign representations. Candidates must have full secondary education, training and experience in financial matters, e.g. accounting or banking; very good Arab and English are as essential as courteous and pleasant conduct.

Written applications should be addressed to:
**Coordinator, UNRWA Headquarters
Wadi Seer (Bayader)
P.O. Box 484, Amman**
or Fax 826177, the latest by February 6, 1994.
(NB: Palestinian origin candidates preferred)

By Dr. Musa Keilani

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

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First things first

PROPHETS OF peace in the Middle East see a region free of war, where democracy prevails, human rights are observed and personal freedoms reign supreme. They see people work, cooperate, prosper, and move freely. They envision megaprojects: Cooperation in a broader region, economic integration, water brought from Turkey to all the countries of the south, a Red Sea-Dead Sea and a Mediterranean-Dead Sea canal that produce enough electric power to spin the wheels of all sorts of joint industrial projects. They dream of a Jerusalem where the faithful, Muslims, Christians and Jews, will worship together instead of fighting over the Holy City.

These are all legitimate dreams that are certainly not beyond human reach. So far they have proved to be illusory. Yet, they require great men and women who should be able to undo the tiny intricacies of ages-old hostility and animosity. To do so those men and women need to convince ordinary people of the validity of the visions of the proponents of peace.

As far as Jordan is concerned there are three issues that must be resolved before moving to the region of grander dreams. These are: Borders, water and refugees.

Jordan, like Israel, the Palestinians and everyone else, needs to regain its occupied lands and draw its borders with its neighbours. It needs to get its rightful share of the region's waters. And no less important, Jordan and all the other parties to the Middle East peace talks need to settle once and for all the issue of the people who were driven out of their homes in the 1948 and 1967 wars and in between. Those people have been the immediate victims of the conflict and unless their plight is dealt with in a just manner peace will always be threatened by their grievances.

Jordan, therefore, should not be expected to sign a peace treaty before these issues are addressed and justly resolved. Jordan is committed to peace, but for peace to hold and lead to the hoped-for security, prosperity and tranquility, it must address the basic issues first. Peace is a dream that requires a great deal of hard work and genuine goodwill on both sides of the conflict.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily echoed His Majesty King Hussein's statement in Washington Tuesday that there can be no signing of a peace agreement with Israel without the solution of all outstanding problems first. A great number of issues still await settlement before any accord can be reached and there can be no stability or security without Israel recognising all the rights of the Jordanian people regarding their land and water, added the paper. Occupied Jordanian lands have to be returned first and a programme for the fair distribution of water should be worked out as should be the issue of refugees, which has to be solved before thinking of signing the peace accord which is the utmost goal, added the paper. King Hussein, in his talks in Washington and before the press and other fora, made these points clear with candid words and with his courageous stand, said the paper. The King was asked why he had not yet signed the peace treaty and he explained, underlining Jordan's legitimate demands that should first be met and also noting that peace should be comprehensive on all tracks, the paper continued. It said Jordan does not want a fragile peace or a shaky agreement but a solid deal that would be fair and acceptable to the coming generations and the Arab Nation at large. The paper said that King Hussein has told the world that it is not the Arabs but rather the Israelis who should take meaningful steps in order to realise the aspired peace because the Arabs are ready for that peace provided they secure their rights and regain their usurped lands.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i dwelt on the health minister's controversial statement in which he accused merchants of manipulating the food and drug trade, calling on other ministers to come out in the open and expose malpractices in their own administration. Bassam Emoush said that the health minister's statement has stirred so much concern among members of the public because he has talked about food and medicine which directly affect people's health. The writer said that he wanted the minister to stand by his statement and to provide evidence to Parliament so that action can be taken to deter public officials and merchants from pursuing their malpractices. The writer said that the government ought to hold the corrupt officials accountable for their actions based on the evidence which will be submitted in due course to Parliament. The writer urged the public to demand that the government pursue this issue and to openly try the culprits and so contribute towards enhancing democracy in Jordan.

Jordanian Perspective

Jordan has stated its case; history will be the judge

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's talks with President Bill Clinton and other American leaders last week and his encounters with Arab-American as well as Jewish American leaders and the media represent a landmark and a turning point in the search for peace in the Middle East and Arab-Jordanian relations.

In his frank and forthright comments, the King left no room for ambiguity on Jordan's commitment and approach to a negotiated peace in the Middle East and his own vision of the future of the region after the basic roots of conflict have been removed.

The visit was a landmark in the sense that it helped draw the bottom lines that Jordan would accept in a Middle East peace settlement and regional coexistence and outline and establish the Kingdom's perceptions of changes in the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli equation to bring about a qualitative improvement in the life of the people of the region.

The visit was a turning point in the sense that the King spoke clearly of the basic requisites that would make the peace process a success and of the ingredients that should go into advancing the quest to achieve an equitable, unambiguous Arab-Israeli peace. There could not be any mistaking of the pragmatism in the Jordanian stand as made clear by the King.

For anyone who was listening, it was clear that Jordan is moving ahead with very clear perceptions of the basic issues that have to be addressed and that the Kingdom was only asking for what is internationally legitimate, fair and just in terms of the rights of sovereign countries and people.

In the short term, the King's comments effectively pulled the rug from the feet of those who had been arguing that his very visit to Washington was aimed at putting the final touches to a Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement without waiting for Jordan's other Arab partners in the Middle East peace process.

He made it clear that while Jordan was seeking progress in its negotiations with Israel it had no intention whatsoever to dump its partners and sign an accord with Israel regardless of the status of negotiations between Israel and the other three Arab parties in the process.

The reaffirmation came as no surprise to those who follow the consistent Jordanian approach against the political realities of the Middle East. But it put to rest those overenthusiastic and sceptical media hawks scrounging for short-sighted but sensational headlines.

In sum, the King's talks with the U.S. leaders and his public

comments established the basic parameters Jordan bases its stand on. These include:

— Jordan, as a sovereign entity, has its own agenda to take care of in the context of peace talks with Israel and it is capable of doing so.

— The Israelis should shift their focus on signing a "peace agreement" with Jordan as a media stunt before grappling with the issues on the table. They should abandon their sinister goal of securing a peace agreement with Jordan to advance their quest for normalisation of relations with other Arab states before addressing the basic concerns of Jordan.

— These concerns relate to occupied Jordanian territory, the Kingdom's water rights and the human dimension of the conflict, that is the fate of Palestinian refugees who remain in Jordan and the burden that the Kingdom has shouldered to host them on its territory. Israel bears a direct responsibility to compensate Jordan in the context of the refugees. Israel's argument that Jews of Arab origin need compensation does not concern Jordan since there is no record of any Jew being displaced from Jordan when the state of Israel was created in 1948. Furthermore, Jordan's demand for compensation is a bilateral issue with Israel with no prejudice on the multilateral aspect of the refugee problem and it does not have any bearing on the right of the refugees to return or to receive compensation.

— King Hussein has no problem meeting with any Israeli leader, including Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, but any such encounter should clearly be prepared well in advance and should contribute to advancing the peace process. There is nothing abnormal in such a meeting since Jordan and Israel are negotiating peace, and there will inevitably come a time when high-level intervention to break logjams will be required. But that does not mean that the King is anxiously seeking a meeting with Mr. Rabin, as the Israeli media interpreted his comments.

Another significant aspect of the King's visit to Washington was his encounter with American Jewish leaders. It was historic in the sense that the Jewish leaders, whose powerful lobbying is behind the so-called strategic American-Israeli relationship, had to be told that Jordan always wanted peaceful coexistence based on justice, rights and fairness — the same principles that the United States of America advocates. The Jewish leaders also had to be reminded that Jerusalem is nobody's backyard. The city is holy to Muslims and Christians as well, and this religious dimension has to be addressed in a manner that satisfies all the three monotheist

religions in the world. Jordan, led by the Hashemites, who have historic links with Jerusalem, will not abandon its rights no matter what and will pursue all efforts for a solution that ensures the Muslim rights in Jerusalem. An inter-faith dialogue is the best means to achieve that, the Jewish leaders were told.

Hopefully, the listeners understood and appreciated the Jordanian stand. The simple fact is that those who might not have realised the significance of what the King was saying might not have been in a listening mode and had come to that meeting with unchangeable, predetermined notions. But then they are from a breed more Israeli than Israel itself and there is nothing anybody could do about it until they themselves see logic.

In the bilateral context, all indications are that Washington has come to acknowledge the pivotal role of Jordan in the region; not that there was ever any doubt of the Kingdom's role, but Jordan was always a victim of being taken for granted.

The revival of the joint Jordanian-American Military Commission and the pledge by U.S. defence secretary-nominee William Perry to positively consider the needs of the Jordanian Armed Forces are the best indicator yet of the visible shift in Washington's approach.

In this context, the King's comments during his talks with Mr. Perry were very clear: Jordan is not seeking to build an offensive force but it has to have the defensive ability to make anyone think twice before threatening it. Jordan is not and will not allow itself to be taken as a walkover for anyone.

By extension, any help given to Jordan to develop its armed forces could also serve the cause of international peace since the Kingdom is ready to expand its role in United Nations peacekeeping operations in any area of conflict. The Kingdom's role in former Yugoslavia is the best example to evidence its interest and commitment.

King Hussein set forth forcefully the Kingdom's perceptions and approach to resolving one of the world's most problematic conflicts where national, international, religious, cultural, economic, strategic and not-so-strategic and ideological interests have been so closely meshed together over the decades that delineating them has become an impossible task.

But Jordan knows where it stands and what it wants. It has set its targets in the sky. Its feet remain on solid ground. It has stated its case but it is not awaiting judgement. History will be the judge.

The Week In Print

Government has a duty to act fast on minister of health's accusations

Reviewed By Elia Nasrallah

The controversial statements of Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas about the violations of regulations concerning imports of food and drugs and the manipulation of these items by local merchants continued to attract writers' attention in the local press. Also discussed over the past week in the press were the prospects for peace and His Majesty the King's visit to the United States and a host of domestic issues.

The health minister has succeeded in arousing the interest and the concern of the Jordanian public through his accusations of merchants and drug dealers, but it would be interesting to see if he can back his words with evidence, said Issa Sbeichi in Al-Dustour.

The writer said that the health minister failed in the television interview of last week to present his proof to the viewers or to provide any justification for his statements and accusations. The writer said he supported the drive for uprooting corruption and expressed hope that the government would take immediate action in the best interest of the public.

Taher Al Udwan, another columnist in Al-Dustour, said that the government's long awaited statement in response to the minister's accusations was poor and not satisfactory.

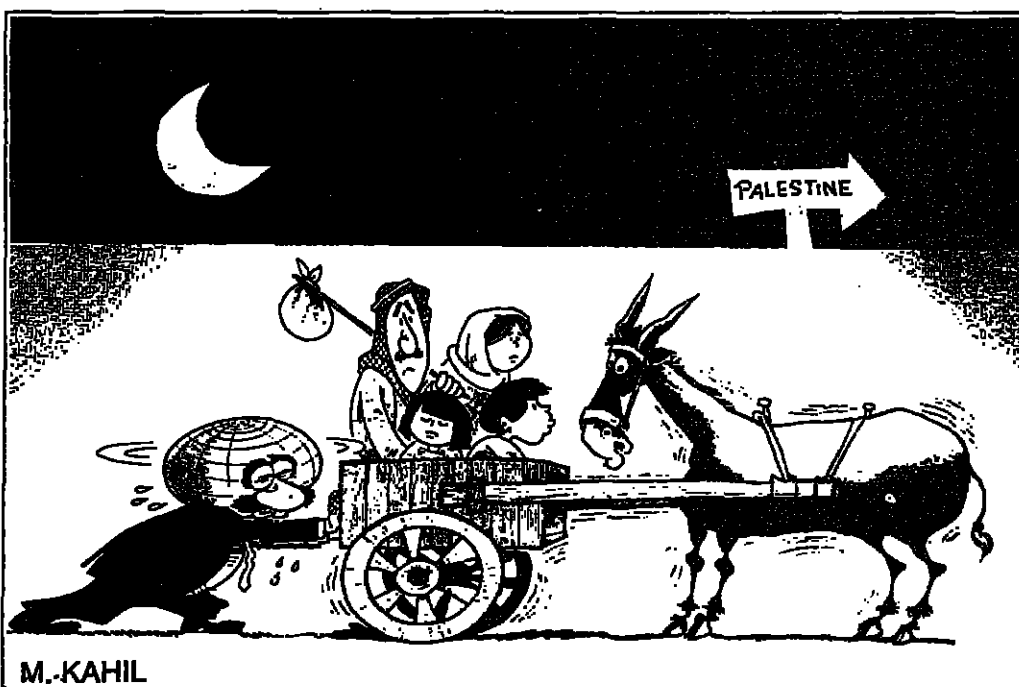
The writer said that the formation of committees to deal with the allegations would not result in anything at all. He said that the health minister has made it clear that he has proof on which the government should have immediately acted, without resorting to the help of the committees.

Mohammad Sbeichi, a columnist in Al-Dustour, predicted that the street vendors will be the only victims of the health minister's charges because the supply minister had openly attacked them on television, noting that the food they sell is unfit for human consumption.

The writer said that while this could be a wise measure, the Supply Ministry is not taking any action against merchants who keep the bad or contaminated food in their warehouses.

He said that the Supply Ministry should take strict measures against merchants who deal with meat, canned food and other foodstuff and should not stop at punishing the street vendors who are trying to make a decent living.

Fahed Al Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i, criticised the Health Minister for alleging that Jordanians are eating garbage. He said that it was the duty of the health and the supply ministries to see to it



that drugs, vegetables and other foodstuff are safe and fit for human consumption on the one hand and that they have the power to stop entry into the country of any contaminated items.

He said that the minister should have been specific about the items and about the sources of corruption and should have taken swift measures to put an end to such malpractices.

Mohammad Daoud, a columnist in Al-Dustour, said that the government and Parliament have a duty to perform vis-a-vis the question of allegations of adulterated food and medicine.

"No one should place the cart before the horse; no peace agreement should be signed before outstanding issues can be resolved."

The writer said that investigations, concerning the exorbitant profits drug stores make reaching 300 per cent in some cases, should start immediately.

Indeed, said the writer, strict measures should be adopted by all ministries to prevent similar excesses.

Zuleikha Abu Rishde said in Al Ra'i that only the people, through their organisations and political parties, can serve as a source of pressure on the government to take quick and effective measures against those tampering with the public health.

The writer said neither the health minister nor any other minister can alone fight but they are in need of public support.

Referring to the Middle

East peace process, Tareq Masarweh cited King Hussein's statements that no one should place the cart before the horse, stressing that no peace agreement should be signed before outstanding issues can be resolved.

The writer, in Al Ra'i daily, said that Jordan's demands for ending Israeli occupation of Jordanian territory and safe distribution of water resources should be met before peace can be established and that U.N. Security Council resolutions ought to be implemented before a comprehensive settlement can be reached.

Fahed Al Fanek, his col-

league in Al Ra'i, demanded not only an end to occupation of Arab land for peace to be achieved, but also guarantees at the international level that Israel would abandon its mass destruction weapons.

He said that Israel should give up the idea of considering the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as an Israeli market, should compensate or repatriate the refugees and should recognise the Arab rights to water resources before peace can be achieved.

Both Al-Dustour and Sawt Al Shaab dailies commented on the outcome of King Hussein's visit to the United States by noting that he seized the opportunity to present Jordan's views and to welcome a permanent and just peace, based on justice.

Major powers struggle for new policy on Bosnia

By Patrick Worsnip
Reuters

LONDON — The major powers are groping around for a new policy on Bosnia, but appear more divided than ever on how to stop the conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic.

The reassessment has been forced on western capitals and Moscow by the growing realisation that their former approach — peace talks, humanitarian aid to civilians, and United Nations sanctions on Serbia — is leading nowhere.

The 21-month-old war is raging on unabated the Geneva peace talks are deadlocked the supply of aid by U.N. peacekeeping troops is becoming ever more difficult and the threat of NATO airstrikes has not been taken seriously by the warring factions.

In this bleak situation, France has taken a lead in pushing its allies for diplomatic action. President Francois Mitterrand told U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Monday that Paris would put forward new proposals, possibly this week.

What the proposals are has not been disclosed, but a French Foreign Ministry spokesman, Richard Duque, said on Tuesday that Bosnia's feuding Serbs, Muslims and Croats had to be persuaded the only solution was through negotiation, not war.

But this week's U.S.-French talks ended in open disagreement with Christopher telling French leaders bluntly that Washington was not willing to put pressure on the Muslims to accept an imposed settlement, since it viewed them as the aggrieved party.

The French call for pressures on the Bosnian factions was also received with scepticism in Britain.

"What pressures can there be?" asked one British official with a shrug.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd will fly to the United States next week for talks on Bosnia and other issues with Mr. Christopher and U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali but there is little hope in London for a miracle solution.

"If you're asking, have we got any brilliant new ideas at the moment, the answer is no," one official said.

Russia called on Tuesday for an urgent meeting of U.N. Security Council foreign ministers to force the warring sides to come to a political settlement, but western diplomats said they had little enthusiasm for the idea.

Last month's elections in Russia, which saw the rise of nationalist and communist parties sympathetic to the Serbs, have made Moscow's agreement to a tough line on Bosnia even less likely, most analysts believe.

Western officials concede

that their options have been narrowed by their decision, taken at the outset of the Yugoslav conflict and still in force, to rule out military intervention.

A series of threats by NATO, repeated most recently at an alliance summit two weeks ago, to bomb Serb positions if the Serbs continued to block aid operations and "strangle" Sarajevo has not been carried through.

In theory, western nations are still threatening to use air power to back a rotation of U.N. troops in the besieged enclave of Srebrenica and reopen Tuzla airport, but officials have made clear they will do everything possible to avoid actual bombing.

Thorvald Stoltenberg, one of the mediators of the Geneva peace talks, said on Tuesday Europe should not be surprised that U.N. resolutions on Yugoslavia were not being carried out when "there is absolutely no willingness to take part in fighting."

But the new factor is the crisis of the aid operation, which is facing increasing obstacles from the factions and is having to turn over at least a third of its supplies to the militias — thus prolonging the war, in the view of some.

Britain, France, Canada and other countries with troops in the U.N. peacekeeping force UNPROFOR are now openly debating whether to withdraw their soldiers once winter is over.

Such a move would do more than simply reduce the amount of aid reaching civilians. It would be a major political gesture that could spark a military free-for-all in Bosnia.

The debate reflects a view among some analysts that, if the West will not intervene in the war and cannot stop it by other means, maybe the best thing it could do is wash its hands of the conflict and let the factions fight it out.

While this might lead to mayhem in the short term, it could in the long run, these analysts argue, be the most merciful solution since the war, decided simply by military might on the battlefield, could end sooner.

But diplomats consider such a course is unlikely. It would cause such an outcry from public opinion as to be politically untenable, they say.

Nevertheless, diplomatic analysts believe a peace settlement is unlikely until the military conflict reaches some sort of equilibrium that will induce all three parties to stop fighting.

The latest round of Geneva peace talks last week failed mainly because the Muslims, believing they are gaining ground in the war, toughened their demands, according to the mediators.

The talks resume on Feb. 10, but there is little hope they will make significant progress.

American ready to revive lost art of mummification

By Joanne Kenen
Reuter

BOCA RATON, FLA. — Mummymaker John Chew has an alternative for dead people who find Irish linen and polyurethane preferable to ashes and dust.

The hitch is that none of the 137 people who have signed up over the past few years for his patented, modern mummy service has died.

In the meantime, Mr. Chew keeps a gauze-wrapped mannequin in a 181-kg velvet-lined bronze sarcophagus, along with a few more mundane items like coffins and viscera charts, in his mortuary sciences classroom at a small Florida college.

Mr. Chew is a gentle, soft-spoken 61-year-old licensed funeral director and teacher whose interest in Egyptology dates back to his Philadelphia boyhood, when a kindly museum curator let him dust the mummies and tutored him in the beliefs and mores of ancient Egypt, shaping the values that he holds today.

"The key is to maintain dignity and care for the human body," said Mr. Chew, who believes ancient Egyptians were in some ways far ahead of contemporary death-denying western society.

As Mr. Chew recognises, mummification is not for everyone. His own family has more conventional views about burial, and is hesitant about having him salted, stuffed and shelved.

But Mr. Chew and several clients of the Utah-based Summum company he works with speak of a certain solace they

get from knowing that their bodies will be eternally preserved.

For instance, Al Greco, a 45-year-old brain cancer survivor, says mummification releases him from any fear "of having my spirit see my body in a decayed state."

Though no one interviewed professed the classic Egyptian belief that the body must be preserved so the soul can inhabit it 3,000 years later, Mr. Greco and others believe in some form of spiritual survival. He also admires the ancient Egyptians' harmony with life and nature.

A craftsman and welder, Mr. Greco plans to design his own stainless steel sarcophagus, or "mummiform", strong enough to survive an earthquake. He will probably adorn it with tools, baseball bats or other items that gave meaning to his life.

Sue Parsons, a healthy 43-year-old piano teacher and body builder, has yet to decide whether her mummiform motif should be music or muscles. But she has made a cast of her facial features, to form a mask on her mummy.

"All other forms of burial seem to me a little bit cold," says Ms. Parsons, who hopes that mummification will gently guide her spirit to wherever it goes after this life.

Her sons accept her decision but she is still trying to find the right words to tell her "conservative Christian" parents back home in Kentucky.

Mr. Chew hooked up a few years ago with Summum founder Corkey Ra — he changed his name to honour the Egyptian sun god — when

they met at a funeral directors' convention in Las Vegas.

They found they shared a life-long interest in Egyptology and mummification, a burial practice associated with ancient Egypt but actually used by several early societies.

Mr. Chew and his fellow Summum "thanatogeneticist" — from the Greek word "thanatos" for death — compared notes and refined their mummification procedures, which use modern chemical drying agents and plastic coatings to speed the 70-day Egyptian method.

"We've enhanced the process," said Mr. Chew, who plans to eventually teach the practice to students and morticians in a one-of-a-kind programme at Lynn College in Boca Raton.

Ra, who has mummified his own pets during his patient wait for human customers, says the 137 people who have signed up are mostly young and healthy and represent a cross-section of religions and professions.

Mummification began in Egypt as a rite for the wealthy and the godlike. In modern times, it isn't cheap.

The basic treatment costs \$7,700 and the mummiforms start at about \$26,000, with no upper limit if jewels and precious metals are incorporated. A \$6,000 fibreglass version is available, but not highly recommended.

Summum does not require a down payment, although it does require clients to make their wishes clear in a will and to arrange the fees, usually through a life insurance policy. The technique is much like that practised millennia ago,

when bodies were soaked in salts from the Nubian desert lakes, then wrapped and buried in the desert.

When a Summum mummy-to-be passes on, he or she will be embalmed and have a traditional funeral service, which Mr. Chew believes is important for the grieving families.

But instead of burial, the mummification starts. Internal organs, except the heart, will be extracted through a 10-inch (25-cm) incision below the ribs. The organs and the body will be cleansed and soaked in a steel vat of salts and chemicals.

Unlike the ancient Egyptians, Summum will not pull the brains out through the nostrils. The brain in modern mummies will be injected with a solidifying agent, Mr. Chew said.

Once dried, the organs will be wrapped in small packets and returned to the body cavity, which is coated with polyurethane, the modern counterpart to resin. The body cavity will then be stuffed with sawdust or similar filler, a practice also used by the ancients to keep human contours.

The body will be coated and then wrapped in cloth. The person can pre-select their own fabric — Irish linen or oriental silk or another fine material for the outer layer.

Finally, the mask is placed over the face and the mummy is placed in the custom-designed mummiform, which is welded shut and injected with argon to replace the oxygen and prevent any moisture from seeping in — ever.

Hospice concept — a way of caring for the terminally-ill patients

By Najwa Kefaya
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Most people who are suffering from a terminal illness, prefer to be at home with their family and friends rather than in an in-patient unit. According to a 1988-89 statistical report, cancer was the third leading cause of death in Jordan, making up 3.5 per cent of male deaths and 6.4 per cent of female deaths. In 1991, 2,316 patients were treated for cancer at the Jordan University Hospital, and approximately 1,214 new cases were diagnosed in the same year. Until recently, for terminally ill patients in Jordan it was not possible to choose between staying at home and being admitted into an in-patient unit. Palliative care services (care for comfort when a cure is no longer possible) were not available for terminally ill patients in their own home. In addition, no support services were available for families and health care professionals caring for these patients.

The need for such comprehensive services was recognised by a group of concerned people in the community, including health care professionals, religious leaders and local businessmen. These people explored the possibility of establishing a home based on a palliative care programme. A consultant from the International Hospice Institute, sup-

ported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), assisted in developing a proposal for the establishment of such a programme in Jordan. As a result, the hospice concept was introduced in Jordan and has since developed into a non-profit voluntary hospice society — the Malath Foundation for Humanistic Care (Hospice). This project was launched under the umbrella of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) and was formally established in April 1993 with the initial funds granted by USAID.

The primary goals of this hospice's programme are to keep the patient at home as long as possible, to supplement and not duplicate existing services, to educate health care professionals and the general public, to help the patient to live as fully as possible and to keep costs affordable.

This initiative has given the terminally ill in Jordan a better chance of spending their last days in their own home environment, thus allowing them as much dignity, peace and consolation as possible. At the same time, adequate health care by professionally trained personnel is provided for managing their pain and controlling the physical symptoms of their illness, as well as addressing their other needs such as spiritual, psychological and social.

This unit has a community-based programme which aims at maintaining patients — as much as possible — at home with the support of an interdisciplinary, trained health team. This team includes physicians, nurses, social workers, counsellors, specialised therapists, religious clergy, as well as other professionals who may be needed. The project now has a board of directors which is responsible for fund raising and major policy decisions.

A professional group which oversees the day to day operations of the foundation is headed by a programme director who is a nurse with a master's degree. In addition, there are four committees which deal with the various activities of the foundation. These committees are educational training, patient management, volunteers and marketing and spiritual support. Services have been successfully provided to five patients and their families over the past six months. New cases are gradually being undertaken by the foundation.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Dr. Sawwan Al Majali, president of the foundation, said that the home care unit is only one part of this project. The future plans of the foundation include the establishment of an in-patient unit. The in-patient unit, according to Dr. Majali, will be set up to serve the living as well as the

dying. It will act as a community resource for advising other health professionals on the palliative care issues and will make available to all patients valuable services such as those of the pain and physiotherapy clinic and the education and research centre. The in-patient unit will work as a backup unit for the home care programme diagnostic work-up, assessment, evaluation and monitoring take place, in addition to pain management and other symptom control and care.

The in-patient programme comes into play when the scope of the patient's medical problem does not allow for care in the home setting. It will also serve to coordinate with home care teams in providing a comprehensive service package to patients and their families. When fully established and operational, it is hoped that the hospice will foster clinical care experience for both nursing and medical students, as well as the organisation of workshops in palliative care and bereavement.

The hospice programme, which is based on a comprehensive approach to care, advocates continuous physiological, sociological, educational, spiritual and emotional care. It concentrates on the patient and the family as the unit for care. Therefore, it invests in the health care team and not in costly technology.

Latest fad of China's rich — platinum jewellery

By Mark O'Neill
Reuter

BEIJING — What do you buy when you already have French suits, Italian leather shoes, a gold watch and your own car?

For China's growing upper class, it's platinum jewellery. "That was the message at Da Ming, a glitzy new jewellery shop on Wangfujing, Beijing's main shopping street, when it opened on Christmas day with a front-counter display of platinum rings encased by diamonds — at a cost of up to 10,000 yuan (\$1,150).

"Platinum appeals to a higher class of people, better educated, and the new rich who already have gold jewellery and want more," said the shop's manager, Chen Qiang.

He said platinum sales so far centre on less expensive items that cost up to 2,000 yuan (\$230), still almost the average

annual income for an urban resident of China in 1993.

The story is the same at the other jewellery shops that have sprung up on Wangfujing, in part to cater to people concerned their money will lose value amid China's high urban inflation.

"We started selling platinum jewellery several months ago," said a saleswoman at one shop. "It appeals to young rich city men who think it is classier than gold. They like the fact that many people do not know how valuable it is, which appeals to their sense of exclusiveness. And designs are improving."

"Only city people buy platinum. Rural people all buy gold. And if you are giving a present, it is safer to give gold jewellery," she said.

Gold jewellery sells in most shops for about 132 yuan (\$15.2) a gramme, compared to 175 yuan (\$20) for platinum. Chinese, suspicious of paper

money, have for centuries bought gold as an investment. But platinum has gained popularity as some Chinese become rich enough to look beyond gold.

In Chinese, platinum is "white gold", an auspicious name.

A spokesman for the China Jewellery Import and Export Corp said the market for platinum jewellery was still limited, although he gave no figures. China does not publish figures on platinum production or sales.

At Da Ming, Mr. Chen said: "Gold jewellery still sells better than platinum."

But platinum sales have been fuelled by the growth in the number of what ordinary Chinese call "da kuan" (fat cats), who think nothing of spending several hundred yuan — a month's income for a Beijing resident — on a single lunch at a high-class restaurant.

"I like it because it is worth more than gold and because it is still exclusive," said a businessman in his 30s who was buying a platinum ring. "Many people do not know how valuable it is."

An official survey published in November found the richest three per cent in China had more money in the bank, 293.2 billion yuan (\$33.7 billion), than all of the nation's 900 million farmers, who have deposits of only 273.7 billion (\$31.5 billion).

According to official figures, the average urban citizen last year earned about 2,300 yuan (\$264) and his cousin in the countryside 840 yuan (\$97).

Most of the urban fat cats are entrepreneurs or work for companies with good official connections, giving them privileged access to goods, raw materials, land, transport and bank credit.

King, Queen in Austria

(Continued from page 1)

In Washington, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and King Hussein met at the State Department.

Mr. Christopher also commented on U.S.-Jordanian ties, telling reporters, "I'm very pleased by a number of developments in the relations between the U.S. and Jordan."

since the last time I met with the King."

Following the meeting, the State Department announced the creation of a U.S.-Jordanian Bilateral Commission "to enhance cooperation... on political, economic and security issues."

The meeting with Mr.

Christopher came on the last day of King Hussein's private visit to the U.S.

The following is the text of the State Department statement on creation of the U.S.-Jordanian Bilateral Commission.

"The United States and Jo-

dan have agreed to establish a joint commission to enhance cooperation on bilateral issues. The commission will facilitate consultations and cooperation on political, economic and security issues. The U.S. and Jordan will decide shortly the timing and venue of the first meeting of the commission."

Zeroual sole candidate

(Continued from page 1)

not made any mention of Mr. Zeroual in its final resolutions. Moves to win backing for a motion of support for Gen. Zeroual's nomination were rejected by conference members Wednesday, many papers added.

Gen. Zeroual's acceptance, still unknown Friday, would fill a threatened power vacuum but at the same time could smack of a thinly-disguised military coup after the army's failure to find a civilian candidate for the presidency.

The High State Council faces a Monday deadline to

designate a new head of state.

The former general has publicly proclaimed the "neutrality" of the army but at the same time said that it will not be indifferent or "cross its arms" in the face of a "dangerous" turn in Algeria's situation.

He took over the defence ministry six months ago from Major-General Khaled Nezzar, a member of the five-man presidency and a tipped rival for the presidential post.

The interior minister and member of the council, Slim Saadi, and former naval chief and ex-Transport Minister Rachid Benyelles were also

said to be possible presidential candidates.

Mr. Khatib denied Gen. Zeroual's role sole candidacy marked "a return of the army." Members of the conciliation conference had demanded guarantees about the role of the army in the three-year period leading to fresh elections in 1997, Mr. Khatib said. The guarantees covered security, democracy, and pluralism, Mr. Khatib added.

Gen. Zeroual, a career officer, took part in Algeria's war of independence against French colonial rule. After the war ended in 1962, he received military training in Russia be-

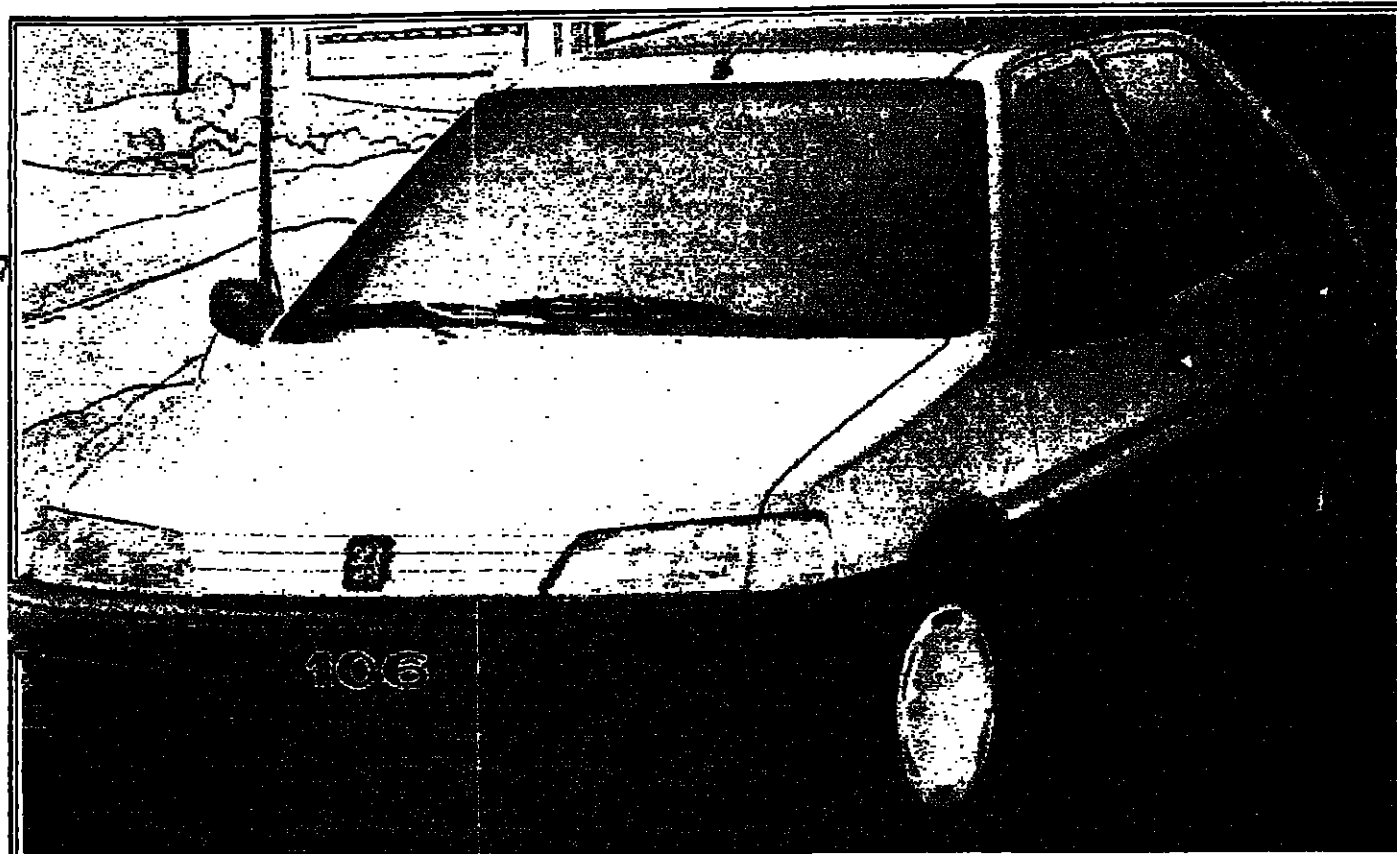
tween 1965 and 1966 and in France in 1974.

Donors agree

(Continued from page 1)

to a state, it was agreed to establish a trust fund to be administered by the World Bank.

It is to be named the Johan Joergen Holst Peace Fund in honour of the late Norwegian foreign minister who mediated in secret Israel-PLO peace negotiations and died this month.



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Yen expected to remain surprisingly resilient this year

This article was submitted by Naser Nabulsi, private client group, Merrill Lynch-Dubai

Overview

Fundamental View: The dollar has moved little against the Deutschmark in recent days, in response to uncertainty about the timing of an expected move toward tighter monetary policy by the Fed and an expected easing of policy by the Bundesbank. Although the U.S. economy appeared to grow at close to a 6 per cent rate in the fourth quarter, monetary tightening could be delayed if the next few months of economic data are weak as a result of cold weather and the California earthquake. Market participants have also pushed back the expected timing for another rate cut by the Bundesbank to late February or early March, although we would not rule out a move on Feb. 3.

We continue to look for the dollar to reach the DM/USD 1.80 level in 3 months and to trade at the DM/USD 1.85 level around midyear. But the yen should remain surprisingly resilient this year, supported by large current account surpluses and a move toward fiscal stimulus. Our 12-month target for the yen is JPY/USD 105.

Technical View: All in all, the week ended Jan. 14 was mixed for the U.S. dollar as the greenback rallied against three of the six currencies we regularly discuss and fell against three. However, the dollar's best gain (1.3 per cent) came against the Deutschmark, allowing the dollar index to post a 0.6 per cent gain for the week.

Both short and medium term sentiment readings for the dollar

are overbought, and with both short and medium term momentum indicators for the index apparently peaking, much further upward progress would seem unlikely. This, coupled with the proximity of potentially important resistance at 97.50-98.00, further suggests that a top is near. Thus, the medium term outlook continues to favour the currencies. Nearby support is just above 94.00, with benchmark support at 90.29.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The British pound remained near its six-month high against the Deutschmark, trading at DM/£ 2.61. Greater signs of economic strength—continued improvement in the labour market and evidence of buoyant consumer spending—have reduced market expectations of prospects for a cut in base rates. Concern about job security is a major factor inhibiting consumer sentiment, and improved prospects for employment should bolster confidence.

We believe base rates will be cut by 50 basis points later in the second quarter, once the impact of April 1 tax increases is assessed. But rates will decline by much less this year than in Germany, leading to pound appreciation against the DM. We are expecting a rise in the pound to DM/£ 2.65 in three months and DM/£ 2.70 at six- and twelve-month horizons. If the pound rises much beyond the DM/£ 2.70 level, the Bank of England would be pressured to cut rates to protect the competitiveness of U.K. exporters. Plenty of slack capacity should limit concern of stimulating demand-driven inflation.

We are forecasting pound depreciation against the dollar to

U.S.\$: 1.46 in 12 months as U.S. short-term interest rates rise by 50 to 75 basis points by the end of 1994.

Technical View: The British pound was virtually unchanged versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Jan. 14-15 U.S.\$: range. Both short and medium term momentum oscillators are showing signs of strength. Short term sentiment has improved to neutral and medium term readings are oversold. Our long-standing support/resistance parameters remain unchanged: A break down through \$1.46-\$1.47 would imply a potential test of important long term support at \$1.40-\$1.42, while a rally through \$1.55 would set the stage for a challenge of long term resistance at \$1.60. Despite overbought momentum, the DM cross-rate broke through 2.59 resistance. While this nominally allows for follow-through to above 2.68, momentum remains overbought. This would suggest that, while still higher highs are possible over the near term, an intermediate peak may not be that far off. Both chart and momentum support exist at 2.53-2.55.

Deutschmark

Fundamental View: The dollar has paused in its uptrend against the Deutschmark and remains near the DM/USD 1.75 level. Despite ample evidence that the U.S. posted robust economic growth in the fourth quarter of last year, recent cold weather and the California earthquake could delay a tightening move in the U.S., by resulting in weak-looking economic data for the first quarter.

The Bundesbank is generally not expected to ease policy again until late February or early March, although recent positive inflation data mean that a rate cut on Feb. 3 cannot be ruled out. The Bundesbank may be taking a cautious approach to easing since monetary growth remains above its target range and wage negotiations are still in progress. Preliminary CPI data for January show a better-than-expected annual inflation rate of only 3.4 per cent in West Germany. The outlook for inflation to moderate further looks excellent, especially if the recent wage agreement in the chemical sector sets a pattern of only 1.5 per cent. German industrial production fell by 2.1 per cent in November to a new cyclical low, suggesting that the economy is faltering again after two positive quarters in 1993. The west German economy contracted 1.9 per cent in 1993, positive quarters in 1993, the sharpest decline in output since the World War II. We continue to look for German 3-month money rates to fall to 4.0 per cent or less by the end of this year compared with 5.80 per cent currently. We maintain our 12-month target of DM/USD 1.85, and expect the dollar to reach the DM/USD 1.80 level in 3 months.

Technical View: The Deutschmark fell 1.3 per cent versus the

U.S. dollar last week, making it the weakest of the six major currencies we most regularly monitor. Both short and medium term momentum appear to be in the process of bottoming, but have not yet done so; a rally back through 1.37 DM/U.S.\$ should be enough to readings are oversold, bolstering the argument that a currency low may not be that far away. Resistance for the currency is indicated at 1.65-1.66, with important support indicated in the area of 1.755.

Japanese yen

Fundamental View: The dollar/yen exchange rate has been volatile in recent days in response to renewed political turmoil in Japan. The defeat of the Hosokawa administration's proposed political reform package in Japan's upper house has cast doubts on how much longer the current government will survive, and roiled Japan's financial markets by suggesting that a badly needed fiscal stimulus package could be delayed for some time. But government bureaucrats have put out the word that they are drafting a 9 trillion yen package of public works spending and loans and are still considering income tax cuts of 6-to-7 trillion yen. Together, these packages would suggest fiscal stimulus of more than 3 per cent of GDP and a move toward large-scale deficit financing by the government. That prospect has led to a sell off in Japan's bond market, with yields up nearly 50 basis points since January 7.

Foreign exchange markets have taken the news on fiscal stimulus as a plus for the yen, since it suggests a policy mix with less reliance on low interest rates going forward. Japan's economy weakened in the fourth quarter and appears in need of both fiscal stimulus and another 50 basis point rate cut by the Bank of Japan. Tokyo department store sales fell 7.6 per cent from a year earlier in December, capping an unprecedented second straight year of declining sales. Inventories remain high in the manufacturing sector, suggesting further production cutbacks ahead.

Even though U.S. growth is outpacing Japan's by a wide margin, we still expect the yen to rise again as trade and current account developments overshadow interest rate and business cycle factors. We look for the yen to trade at the JPY/USD 105 level in 12 months.

Technical View: The Japanese yen gained 0.8 against the U.S. dollar last week. At present, short term sentiment is essentially neutral, while medium term sentiment remains oversold. Last week's rally was enough to penetrate the downward channel that had been in force since the December high; however, the post-November downward remains—at least to this point—intact. Short term momentum has bottomed, and medium term oscillators appear to be bottoming, so that post-November trend may be in its late stages.

We continue to believe that the yen's weakness last July is a counter trend move, so normal reaction support is indicated in the 113-114 2Y.U.S.\$ range and almost certainly not beyond 116-117. A penetration of that latter level would weaken the long term uptrend and imply a full retrace of the 1993 rally. Nearby resistance is 108-109.

A multinational oil & gas company operating in Yemen invites qualified Jordanians to apply in strict confidence for the following two job openings in Yemen.

Disbursement Supervisor (DSO1)

Responsibilities:

- Manage multicultural department and provide job skills training.
- Plan and administer the disbursement function.
- Ensure payments are made on a timely manner with regard to the company's cash flow.
- Ensure records are well maintained.
- Prepare statements for management, partners shareholders and government agencies.
- Maintain effective working relationships with local and international suppliers/contractors.

Qualifications:

- University degree or equivalent, combined with accreditation in a recognised accounting body.
- Five to eight years of experience in supervising an accounting function.
- Computer literate.

Assistant Treasurer (ATO1)

Responsibilities:

- Supervision of Treasury Department.
- Control payments to local and international suppliers.
- Supervision of Yemen banking and cash handling procedures.
- Liaison with bankers in Yemen.
- Successful candidate will be considered for promotion to the position of Treasurer after the successful completion of an initial probationary period.

Qualifications:

- University degree or equivalent
- Five or more years experience in computerised treasury environment in a large or medium sized corporation.

Applicants to both positions must be reliable, hard working, possess supervisory and leadership skills and fluent in both, spoken & written, Arabic and English.

Send your CV and a personal photo, identifying the job you are applying for, to:

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A member firm of Arthur Anderson Co. SC
P.O.Box 9847 Amman, Jordan

Not later than Feb. 15, 1994

Manila hikes fuel prices

MANILA (AFP) — The cash-strapped Philippine government drastically raised fuel and electricity prices Friday in an apparent bid to secure a new International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme to support economic recovery.

Unions responded by calling for a general strike to force the government to roll back oil prices, transport firms sought higher fares, and shocked motorists jammed service stations to fill up tanks before the new rates took effect at noon.

Stocks tumbled amid fears of labour unrest along with higher interest rates and inflation, which had cooled down to eight per cent at the end of 1993.

An oil price increase had been expected but consumers were unprepared for its severity. The price of diesel, the main fuel of public transport, rose 22 per cent. Liquefied petroleum gas, used for cooking, was 28 per cent costlier. Premium gasoline now costs 11.55 pesos (41 cents) a litre at the pump, from 10 pesos. The cost of electricity will also rise in February, throwing middle-class and low-income households into disarray.

Critics have accused the IMF, known for austerity policies, of forcing Manila to increase oil prices and raise revenues by other means as a condition for approving a proposed \$650 million, three-year facility.

The increase came two days after the government and an IMF mission announced agreement on the framework of the facility, expected to be in place by April.

Manila, with a foreign debt of \$34 billion, needs such an arrangement to support its balance of payments.

Turkish stocks tumble again amid inflation fears

ANKARA (R) — Turkish stocks tumbled again on Friday as the impact of this week's lira depreciation and interest rate rises rippled through the economy.

Economists and businessmen voice fears that Turkey could be headed for triple-digit inflation and slowed growth this year.

Investors, alarmed by economic uncertainty, piled out of the Istanbul Stock Exchange, the 69-share index plunged 4.8 per cent to 18,561 points for a loss of nearly 29 per cent this week.

A senior official said Prime Minister Tansu Ciller asked the finance ministry Friday to design new tax breaks for stock-based funds to try to buoy the shaken bourse.

The lira, which opened at 17,800 to the dollar, rose later to 17,100 on the back of central bank dollar sales and a surge in interbank overnight borrowing rates, which hit 300 per cent.

Dealers reported strong demand for dollars from banks trying to square short positions totalling up to \$5 billion. Banks had borrowed heavily in foreign currency in recent years to exploit the gap between lira depreciation and

local interest rates.

Dealers said the central bank was likely to continue intervening next week to prevent a new run on the lira.

Turkey devalued the lira by 12 per cent Wednesday after a 10-day money crisis. The central bank and treasury raised their interest rates in parallel moves to bolster the currency.

The devaluation is certain to add a new twist to Turkey's spiralling inflation, running at 71.1 per cent in 1993.

"Turkey may see inflation at 90 to 100 per cent this year," Atalay Sahinoglu, head of the Istanbul Chamber of Trade, said.

Petrol prices went up 10 per cent Thursday in a swift response to the devaluation, which has raised the cost of all imports, including oil. Turkey imports over 80 per cent of the crude oil it consumes. Prices of transport, food and many consumer goods are expected to rise soon.

"The arrow of inflation has left its bow," said Husamettin Kavi, chairman of Istanbul Chamber of Industry.

Turkey's original target was to hold the increase in wholesale prices to 48.2 per cent in 1994, compared to 60.3 per cent last year. The government was aiming for a 4.5 per cent growth rate.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY JANUARY 29, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: An excellent day to engage in outside activities with congenials and to let those of whom you are most fond, know of your devotion to them. Secrets come to light now as you delve into them on your own.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't waste time in regrets over something and expect friends to grieve with you. Get busy working on hobbies instead, and if necessary to out socially.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Act in a very circumspect manner today or you can take away from present security or prestige you now enjoy. Be kind, courteous to all you meet.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You are tempted to fly out to new places with new people and leave duties and old friends behind, but this would get you nowhere and could mean trouble later.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You believe that by using a different psychology on friends you can get the best of them, but this would be unkind and unworthy of you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Associates can suddenly say something off guard today that will cause a close tie to become very critical of you, this could cause you some problems.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you are not careful in your Saturday tasks, there is bound to be damage of some

kind. Then take any health treatments you may need and also get wardrobe in good order the next week.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) In your desire to have a good time, you may put aside other duties that would require a certain expenditure of time and money—would be put to really good use.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Important you use diplomacy with close ties today or there can be a battle royal. Be cool and collected and make sure you do nothing that takes your present security.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Particular care must be taken while out driving or walking. Don't take trips unless absolutely necessary. Be firm, but gentle in speech.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) This is one of those days when you are apt to invest far more than your purse allows, especially where real estate and other investments are concerned.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Make sure you do nothing that will lose you all that good will and prestige you have laboriously been building up. Don't lose your temper or go off on any tangents.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Every opportunity is yours now to gather the information you need quietly from secret sources, since others are more than willing to help you.

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

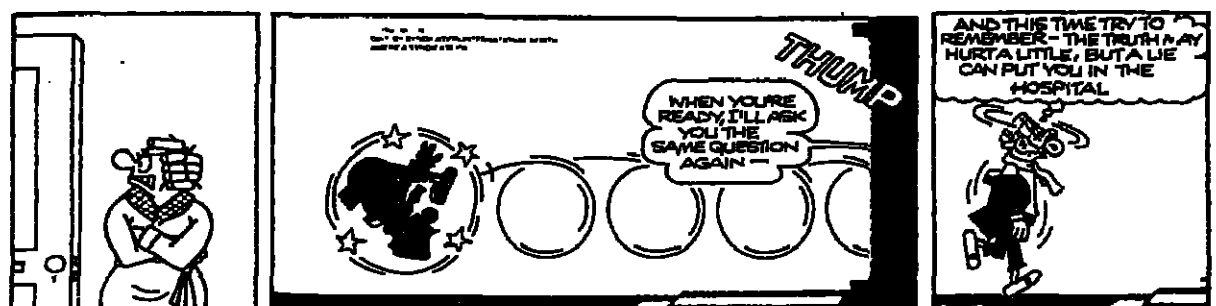


"If income taxes get too high, I'll just beg my boss for a pay cut."

Peanuts



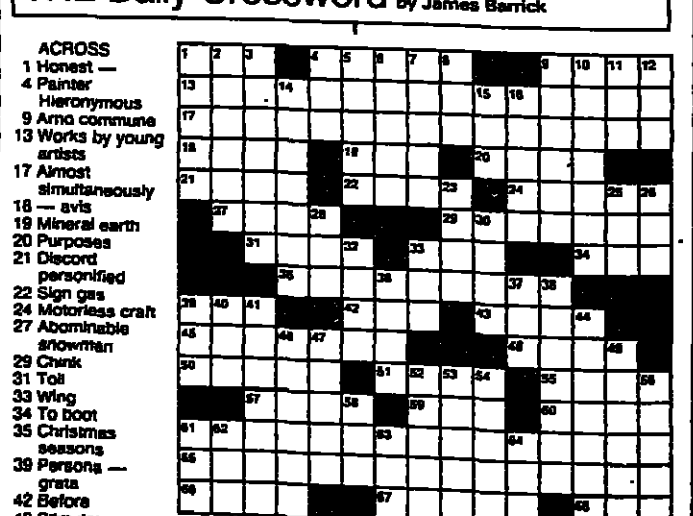
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by James Barrick



ACROSS
1 Honest
4 Painter
9 Hieronymus
13 Works by young artists
17 Almost simultaneously
18 — avs
19 Mineral earth
20 Purpose
21 Discard
22 Sign gas
24 Motorless craft
27 Abominable
29 Chink
31 Tail
32 Wing
34 To boot
35 Christmas seasons
39 Persons — great
42 Before
43 Stimulate
45 Put up
48 Mr. Guinness
50 Steam
51 Highest stage
55 Publicize
57 Spring
59 — Abner
60 Official proceedings
61 Live TV groups
65 Western geographic landmark
68 Low card
69 Flur
68 Liquor

DOWN
1 Flaming
2 Consisting of two
3 Constraints
4 Wild noise
5 Mr. Wells
6 Lean
7 Carved gem
8 Hester
9 — Simon met a —

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:
817 YWEEB SOME
APAR REMER EME
OWMYESTERDAYING
LVE RAVE RATIO
RAIRN EOB RAE
ALLER EOB RAE
MENDAVRER EOB RAE
MAR EOB RAE
AND RAE RAE
SARAD OPAI ELP
ELER EOB RAE
RATIS SCOLD MERT

52 Hints
53 Fabled king
54 "Fur"
(Beethoven)
55 Discoment
56 Pee place
57 Jet letters
58 Seaman
59 Parsaphian
60 Newt

World News

U.S. plans more arms deployment in S. Korea

SEOUL (R) — The United States seeks to deploy other advanced weapons in South Korea besides Patriot defence batteries to counter threats from North Korea, a Defence Ministry spokesman said Friday.

"The U.S. and our country have been working on improving combat capabilities, including the deployment of Patriot missiles," he said, commenting on local news reports that 36 Patriot launchers would be deployed in March or April.

"The United States is going to deploy two battalions of Apache (attack) helicopters and replace old equipment with advanced (equipment) under the force improvement plan," he said.

U.S. forces now keep older Cobra helicopters in South Korea.

The spokesman confirmed Seoul's support for the deployment of Patriot missiles, which were used with some success in the Gulf War to shoot down Iraqi Scud missiles.

"There is no reason why we should oppose the plan. We constantly face military threats from the North and we have to brace up to any contingencies," he said.

But he denied the timing and size of the deployment had been decided. "The question of when and how many have yet to be decided through close (South) Korean-U.S. consultation," he said.

South Korea's state radio and national Yonhap News Agency quoted an unnamed government official as saying Friday the box-like Patriot launchers would be deployed in March, or April at U.S. military bases on the Korean peninsula.

"The preparation for early deployment is also aimed at putting pressure on the difficult negotiations between North Korea and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)," the official was quoted as telling local media.

"I understand the missiles will eventually be deployed in Japan if North Korea's nuclear

issue is resolved," he was quoted as saying.

A South Korean presidential spokesman said he had no knowledge of a plan for Japanese deployment.

South Korea and U.S. officials have become increasingly impatient over the lack of progress in talks aimed at compelling the North to allow inspections of suspected nuclear sites.

In Vienna, IAEA spokesman David Kyd said the plan to deploy Patriot missiles in South Korea was unlikely to affect talks to persuade Pyongyang to allow full examination of seven declared sites under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

North Korea was trying to limit the scope of IAEA inspections in several significant ways, according to the agency.

Some South Korean lawmakers have expressed concern that the missile plan might provoke unpredictable North Korea but Washington officials indicated that President Bill Clinton was leaning towards approving a request for Patriots from the commander of U.S. forces in South Korea.

Patriots could be used against a North Korean variant of tactical Scud missiles and a more sophisticated version of the Rodong missile capable of reaching most points in South Korea.

South Korean Foreign Minister Han Sung-Joo said on U.S. television Thursday that U.S. and South Korean forces could deal with any "provocation" by North Korea.

Dismissing arguments that U.S. and South Korean troops would be overwhelmed by an invading North Korean force, he said: "We are convinced that the United States and the Republic of Korea combined have adequate force and readiness to deal with any military provocation by North Korea."

The United States and South Korea have applied carrot-and-stick measures to persuade Pyongyang to give up its nuclear aspirations.

Mr. Han told a seminar this

week a decision would be taken within three weeks on whether to carry on efforts to secure a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

The United States has said it will seek sanctions against Pyongyang if it prevents proper inspection.

Meanwhile, North Korea's official news agency accused the United States and South Korea Friday of staging "provocative joint air war exercises" in the skies of South Korea this week, quoting military sources.

"Overseas-based FA-18s, AV-8s and other fighters of the U.S. Marines and 160 fighter-bombers, assault planes, observation planes and reconnaissance planes belonging to the U.S. Air Force in South Korea and the South Korean Air Force held in an air battle exercise for the command of the air and an air attack operation in the skies above Ryeju, Hongchon and Tanyang," the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said, quoting military sources.

It said the exercises took place Tuesday and Wednesday.

"Over 100 fighter-bombers and assault planes held a surprise attack exercise on ground targets in the skies above Pyongyang, Pongchang and Tokjuk Island, and an exercise of 'commandos' dropping, air-lifting (and) detecting air targets," took place in the skies above Phaju and Chunchon," KCNA said.

"Meanwhile, formations of assault planes and helicopter gunboats which were flown to support a ground attack operation held a combined exercise with motorised infantry units" of the South Korean army in order to practice "for a breakthrough on the military demarcation line and an advance into the depth," the agency said.

The reported U.S.-South Korean decision to deploy Patriot missiles in the South would be an "unpardonable grave military challenge", North Korea said Friday.



First Lady Hillary Clinton (left) talks with how his house in Hollywood was destroyed by the homeowner Raymond O'Keefe as he describes earthquake (AFP photo)

Britain suspends Bosnia aid convoy after killing of driver

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — An armed gang halted three Britons on a relief mission in central Bosnia, robbed them, and then opened fire, officials said Friday. One aid worker was killed and two were wounded.

The new bloodshed highlighted growing lawlessness and desperation in central Bosnia, where food is dangerously short. Aid officials warned such attacks could endanger their entire mission to feed hungry Bosnians.

Peace mediator Lord David Owen called the killing of 35-year-old Paul Goodall, father of four daughters, a "cold-blooded shooting" and a "great tragedy."

"If this kind of thing continues," said spokesman Ron Redmond for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, "we won't be able to operate."

Mr. Goodall and the two other drivers, 27-year-old Simon King and 42-year-old David Court, were returning to their hotel in Zenica, a government-held town about 65 kilometres northwest of Sarajevo late Thursday when the attack occurred.

Mr. Redmond said three unidentified men in uniform armed with assault weapons halted the Britons' four-wheel-drive vehicle and demanded that they drive to an overpass about three kilometres (1.8 miles) from Zenica. They then demanded the vehicle, but after it was turned it over, one of the gunmen ordered the other two to kill the aid workers.

The attack highlighted a breakdown on law in the Zenica area. Several food convoys have been attacked in recent weeks, and six Bosnian police officers were wounded in nearby Kakanj earlier in the week.

Food is critically short in the town of Kakanj, south of Zenica.

Mr. Goodall was killed immediately by two shots to the head, and the other two were wounded as they ran. Mr. King was wounded in the shoulder and arm. Mr. Court was shot in the back, and the bullet exited his chest.

Both were transported to a British military hospital in nearby Vitez. Mr. Court, the more seriously wounded of the two, was in serious but stable condition.

Mr. Goodall's body was found in a mine field about 50 metres from the road. Officials said U.N. soldiers had to clear the minefield to reach his body. The former British soldier had been a member of the Royal Engineers, and had been on mine-clearing assignment during the Gulf War.

He was the father of daughters aged 10, 8, 6, and 2 years.

The drivers worked for Britain's Overseas Development Administration, but were working at the time for UNHCR.

"We call upon the local authorities to bring whoever is responsible to justice as soon as possible," said an official with the Overseas Development Administration in London, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The attack highlighted a breakdown on law in the Zenica area. Several food convoys have been attacked in recent weeks, and six Bosnian police officers were wounded in nearby Kakanj earlier in the week.

Food is critically short in the town of Kakanj, south of Zenica.

Fighting and bureaucratic delays by Bosnia's warring factions means only a small percentage of the minimum amount of food needed actually arrives.

"Obviously, people in the Kakanj area are extremely hungry and they're desperate, and that's why it's becoming a very dangerous situation," Mr. Redmond said.

UNHCR chief Karen Abu Zaid was en route to Zenica and hoped to meet later in the day with Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic to discuss the attack.

The British driver was the 11th person working for UNHCR killed in Bosnia. Mr. Redmond said. After the last death, on Oct. 25, 1993, aid convoys were suspended for about four weeks.

Britain Friday suspended all its aid convoys in the former Yugoslavia after the murder.

A spokesman for the Overseas Development Administration said the decision involved aid provided by official British funds but did not affect the role of British U.N. troops in Bosnia.

The spokesman said Britain wanted to consider the implications of the attack on the three workers.

"All British aid convoys throughout the whole of Yugoslavia have been suspended while we consider what our next move will be," the spokesman said. He could not say how long the suspension would last.

De Klerk gets mixed reception from blacks

BELOFAST, South Africa (AFP) — Blacks greeted President F.W. De Klerk with a mixture of applause and hostility Friday as he took his election campaign to South Africa's eastern Transvaal province.

Mr. De Klerk began the second day of his three-day sweep through the region with his first vote-seeking visit to a black township.

But most of the residents of Hlalanikhale, outside the coal-mining town of Witbank, were less than pleased to see the president.

Bands of youths shouted "down with De Klerk" as he arrived in the township.

His attempt to speak to the

crowd was drowned out by the chanting of African National Congress (ANC) supporters.

Mr. De Klerk visited the house of a black supporter of his ruling National Party (NP), before telling the crowd that the ANC could not be trusted to run the country after the April 27-29 all-race election.

The NP supporter, Simon Maseke, told journalists he had joined the NP last year after he was offered a job as a bricklayer.

While De Klerk was there, township residents threatened to burn Mr. Maseke's house and police said they evacuated Mr. Maseke after the president's departure.

Mr. De Klerk also received a

hot reception in the black township of Lynnville, where people chanted ANC slogans as he visited a migrant labour hostel that had been turned into family units — and where he was served tea by a woman wearing an ANC T-shirt.

Mr. De Klerk's foray to a potato farm near Belfast was far more successful.

Hundreds of black farm workers and their white employers waved NP flags and chanted "viva De Klerk" as the president arrived.

He told the workers not to be afraid of ANC intimidation because the ballot in April's three-day election would be secret.

poor would have better representation.

The Zapatistas seized several Chiapas cities on New Year's Day but has retreated to jungle strongholds following heavy attacks by the Mexican army. More than 100 people died in the early days of the rebellion.

Mr. Salinas at first tried to crush the insurgency by calling in thousands of troops, but switched to a strategy of appeasement that included the naming of former Foreign Minister Manuel Camacho Solis as his peace envoy.

In a Thursday speech to a meeting of his cabinet and the country's governors, Mr. Salinas admitted that the rebels were not without a cause.

"On various occasions... I have indicated that it looked as if the Mexican revolution had not happened in Chiapas," he said.

"There have existed political circumstances that must be recognised: Many stories of abuse... on occasion, lack of political work by authorities and organisations to be close to their fellow citizens (and), equally important, lack of opportunities," Mr. Salinas said.

Early on, they threatened to move on Mexico City to overthrow the government and hold fair elections so that the

Quake food lines swell as Mrs. Clinton visits area

LOS ANGELES (R) — Thousands of earthquake victims lined up for food stamps as first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton visited quake-ravaged areas that her husband missed on his tour last week.

The lines for food stamps were reminiscent of the bread lines during the Great Depression of the 1930s, but there was no repeat of the unruly scenes of Wednesday when tempers flared as frustrated help seekers were turned away.

Mrs. Clinton toured parts of south central Los Angeles that were torn by riots in 1992 and then socked by the Jan. 17 earthquake, as well as a devastated street in Hollywood.

When President Bill Clinton visited the area two days after the earthquake, which measured 6.6 on the Richter Scale, he concentrated on the hardest hit area, the San Fernando Valley.

That brought protests from mostly black and Hispanic south central, still struggling to overcome the devastating effects of the April 1992 riots which killed 54 people, closed hundreds of businesses and left the area in economic chaos.

The area, like much of Los Angeles, suffered serious damage in the earthquake.

Mrs. Clinton visited a school in south central where she talked to children and attended an earthquake counselling session.

The fourth, fifth and sixth-grade youngsters read essays to Mrs. Clinton that they had written about the quake.

One girl, identified only as Wendy, read an essay saying, "I was sleeping when I jumped up... My bed was jumping up and down and to the sides... I don't care if we die, it's all up to God."

Shortly before Mrs. Clinton arrived in the region, the city was rocked by a 4.5-magnitude aftershock which jangled "Angelenos" already frayed nerves.

It was the strongest aftershock in three days and building safety officials said it was severe enough to warrant the re-inspection of many buildings that had been weakened by the quake but which had been declared safe.

Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan was due in Washington Friday to try to persuade lawmakers to pass Mr. Clinton's supplemental aid bill for an additional \$6.6 billion for the stricken area.

"California needs the nation's help. But we dare not settle for rough estimates or outright guesses at the cost. If we do, we risk being seriously short-changed by Congress because we rushed to judgment," Mr. Riordan said before boarding an overnight flight.

He said the city should have its damage assessment completed in about 10 days. "Then we will know what it will take to rebuild."

The Northridge earthquake killed 60 people, and the damage was expected to be over \$30 billion, making it the most expensive natural disaster in U.S. history.

About 25,000 people lost their homes and 14,000 housing units have been deemed uninhabitable. Thousands remained in makeshift camps and tent cities or in Red Cross and Salvation Army shelters.

But officials said the number had dwindled from a high of 20,000 to about 4,500 as thousands of housing vouchers, which allow the newly homeless to rent alternative accommodation at no cost for 18 months, had been handed out.

Many of the "nervous homeless," people too frightened to return to their homes although the buildings were not damaged, had ventured back to their dwellings, officials said.

In Washington, U.S. Representative Dana Rohrabacher, a Republican representing affluent Orange County south of Los Angeles, which was virtually untouched by the quake, said he would offer an amendment to bar undocumented immigrants from getting earthquake aid to an emergency appropriations bill requested by Mr. Clinton to fund disaster relief.

"I want the people of California to understand that hundreds of millions of dollars that should be going to them is instead going to illegal aliens and it's absolutely outrageous," Rev. Rohrabacher said in a statement.

Liz Taylor vows support for Jackson

LOS ANGELES (R) — Elizabeth Taylor, a long-time friend of Michael Jackson, said Thursday she remained convinced of the pop star's innocence after his settlement of a lawsuit filed by a boy accusing him of sexual molestation. The movie star, who once called Jackson "one of the least weird people I know," welcomed the resolution of the case, saying continuation of it "would have been one of the most tragic public spectacles ever, with everyone losing."

A source close to Jackson's camp said Jackson had agreed Tuesday to pay the 14-year-old boy at least \$5 million in return for dropping the case. News reports have put the figure as high as \$25 million. "Thank God this case is being dismissed," Ms. Taylor said in a written statement.

"As one of Michael's closest friends, who is convinced of his innocence, I am relieved over the daily avalanche of lies, innuendoes and slurs, none of which Michael deserved."

Helmsley released from house arrest

NEW YORK (AFP) — Hotelier Leona Helmsley, 73, was released from house arrest after serving 21 months in jail and three more at home following a March 1992 conviction for income tax evasion. Reviled by the tabloid press as the queen of mean for her mistreatment of servants, Mrs. Helmsley, along with her husband Harry, had been charged with writing off personal expenditures as business expenses. Mr. Helmsley, now 84, was found to be incompetent to be tried, but Mrs. Helmsley, who reportedly once said that "only little people pay taxes," was convicted and sentenced to four years in prison. She was given time off her sentence because of her age, the age of her husband and because of good behaviour. She also paid \$8.1 million in fines and back taxes.

1 Israeli woman in 10 is beaten — study

TEL AVIV (AFP) — One Israeli woman in 10 is regularly beaten by her husband or another relative, and 40,000 a year need hospital treatment as a result, the Israeli Women's Association said in a survey. A total of 200,000 Israeli women suffer from beatings, according to the study reported by the daily Yediot Aharonot. Sixteen women were killed by a relative in the first nine months of 1993, 22 during the whole of 1992 and 40 in 1991, the study said. It said 14 per cent of Israeli men and nine per cent of women agree that the beatings could be justified under certain circumstances.

Naked actress takes to stage in London church

LONDON (R) — A rock musical in which the pope collapses and dies after being seduced by a naked nun in the Vatican has been staged at a Congregational Church in north London, a British newspaper reported Friday. "Bad Boy Johnny and the Prophets of Doom," a \$40,000 (\$60,000) Australian musical, was approved by the church's minister, Janet Wootton, but has come under fire from Roman Catholics as being in bad taste, the Daily Telegraph said. Rev. Wootton said: "I had no idea there was nudity in the show. I have asked the director to change that so that the actress is not naked." She said she had allowed the church to be used for dances, concerts and performances "so we can carry out our religious duty to care for the community."

Housebreaker goes to work in style

SINGAPORE (R) — Singapore police stopped a BMW coupe after a car chase to find its owner had a complete set of housebreaking tools in his boot, the Straits Times newspaper reported Friday. This is the first time that we have arrested a suspected housebreaker who owns a vehicle of this type," said police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Foo Kia Juah. "It's certainly more expensive than my car," he told the Straits Times. An electric hacksaw, a crowbar, torchlights, gloves, pliers, a multi-tool cutter and a power drill were found in the boot of the car, which costs about Singapore dollars 180,000 (\$112,500), the newspaper said.

N. Ireland talks held amid new violence

DUBLIN (R) — Britain and Ireland held talks Friday on a peace plan for Northern Ireland amid resurgent violence by Protestant extremists and their Irish Republican Army guerrilla foes.

Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring and Sir Patrick Mayhew, Britain's Northern Ireland secretary, met in Dublin for their first talks since the Anglo-Irish initiative was unveiled on Dec. 15 in a bid to end 25 years of conflict.

Sir Patrick and Mr. Spring are expected to call on Sinn Fein, political wing of the IRA, to end a six-week guessing game and clearly endorse the plan and its renunciation of violence when they hold a joint news conference (eds: 1430 GMT). Irish officials said.

Britain and Ireland are irritated at Sinn Fein's failure to give a speedy response to the plan and by repeated demands for direct talks. They say talks can be held only after the guns are silenced.

The talks were given added urgency by the killings of two Roman Catholics by Protestant extremists Thursday, the first sectarian killings of 1994, and a wave of attacks by IRA guerrillas who want to end British rule of the province.

The IRA has attacked British security forces repeatedly since a three-day Christmas truce ended. On Thursday it

exploded firebombs in London's main shopping district to drive home its "Britain-out" message.

Sources close to the Republican movement said they feared Protestant extremists were trying to harden IRA attitudes in order to derail the Anglo-Irish peace plan, which would give Sinn Fein a key role.

It offers to bring Sinn Fein in from the cold and give it equal treatment with mainstream political parties in Northern Ireland, providing the organisation publicly renounces violence and gets the IRA to "bring its war on Britain to an end."

Officially, Sinn Fein says it is committed to peace but its charter says it understands Irish people who resort to violence to end British "occupation" of Northern Ireland.

Sinn Fein has in vain demanded clarification on the text of the Dec. 15 Anglo-Irish joint declaration, which says Britain would not object to the reunification of Ireland if a majority in Northern Ireland agreed.

Its main thrust is to end 25 years of violence and get Catholics throughout the island and the pro-British Protestant majority in Northern Ireland talking about a joint future.

Sinn Fein was under renewed pressure to make a clear

break with IRA violence. Friday after the U.S. State Department said Washington would lift a ban on granting its President Gerry Adams an American visa if he dissociated himself from the IRA campaign.

The opinions of the large Republican community in Northern Ireland are important in shaping Sinn Fein's response to the declaration, which is not expected until the end of March.

The declaration acknowledges the right of all Irish people to shape the future of their island but gives Protestant Unionists who want to maintain 300-year-old links with Britain a veto over any moves towards reunification.

A U.S. State Department spokesman said in a statement Thursday: In making a decision on whether to grant him a waiver on his ineligibility, it is important for us to have an understanding of his position on achieving peace in Northern Ireland.

"After consulting with the Irish and British governments, we have instructed our embassy in Dublin to determine whether he will publicly renounce violence and support the joint declaration" on peace in Northern Ireland issued by Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds and British Prime Minister John Major, he said.

Major's support unchanged despite scandals

LONDON (R) — Prime Minister John Major's Conservative government has not been affected by a string of financial and sex scandals, according to an opinion poll published by the Times newspaper Friday.

John Major has suffered an onslaught of bad news this month. His "back to basics" policy, advocating a return to traditional values, has come under fire because of sex and financial scandals in his party.

But the Mori poll found electoral support for the Conservative Party had not changed from last month and was still at 28 per cent.

The opposition Labour Party was well in front on 48 per cent and the centrist Liberal Democrats were on 20 per cent. The Conservative Party has been at the same level, plus or minus one percentage point, since last May, Mori said.

The poll found support for Labour had grown among the middle classes and those living in the southeast of England, traditionally a rich source of support for the Conservatives.

For the first time in the history of Mori polls, which began in the 1970s, the Conservatives were level-pegging with Labour among the upper, professional and middle classes. Both parties were on 37 per cent, compared with the last general election in 1992, when the Conservatives had 54 per cent and Labour 22 per cent.

Mr. Major, deeply unpopular and his policies in disarray, has turned to a new voice to put across his message.

Suave diplomat Christopher Meyer took over Thursday as press secretary to the British prime minister, replacing former treasury economist and Major confidant, Gus O'Donnell.

Mr. O'Donnell is one of the few people in the Downing Street official residence close to Mr. Major, an isolated figure who regards his spokesman both as friend and adviser. Both share humble roots and a love of soccer.

Mr. O'Donnell leaves after three years of highs but even deeper troughs. He guided Mr.

Major's performance during the Gulf war when he became the most popular prime minister since World War II leader Winston Churchill. Since then it has been largely downhill.

Like President Bill Clinton, who changed press secretaries last year at a time of slumping fortunes, the move comes as the British leader badly needs help.

Mr. Major is now the most unpopular leader since polls began. He has reversed tax pledges and his "back to basics" morality platform is a joke after revelations of ministerial infidelity.

Friends say little blame can be put at Mr. O'Donnell's door since he has had weak material to work with. But rumblings of discontent in the Conservative Party have grown in recent weeks.

As Mr. O'Donnell returns to a senior post in treasury, in comes Mr. Meyer, a former deputy ambassador to Washington given to wearing lurid socks and braces under elegantly tailored suits.

Mexican government, parties agree to reforms

MEXICO CITY (R) — The Mexican government and eight political parties signed an agreement Thursday calling for sweeping and unprecedented electoral reforms in an attempt to end a peasant uprising in the southern state of Chiapas.

The agreement took a giant step toward meeting one of the central demands of the Zapatista National Liberation Army, which launched a New Year's Day insurgency calling for indigenous rights and political empowerment through clean and just elections.

It also held out the prospect of loosening the grip of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has dominated the government for 64 years, often through the use of electoral fraud.

The agreement calls for, among other things, independent electoral authorities, an end to use of government funds by any political parties and a prosecutor to pursue those accused of electoral fraud. It also calls for fair treatment of all parties in the Mexican media, which traditionally has given most of its coverage to PRI candidates.

In separate reforms adopted by Mexico's Electoral Tribunal Thursday, campaign spending

limits for presidential candidates were lowered from \$220 million to \$43 million.

Interior Minister Jorge Carpizo, announcing the agreement, said special sessions of the Mexican Congress would be called if necessary to change laws to codify the reforms.

"The most important matter for the country is the reestablishment of a just and lasting peace," he said.

"For that, a necessary condition is that democracy advances with an impartial (presidential) election in 1994 that is accepted by the citizens and the political forces of Mexico," said Mr. Carpizo, a respected human rights defender who became interior minister when President Carlos Salinas de Gortari reshuffled his cabinet following the outbreak of the Zapatista rebellion.

The rebels, many of whom are descendants of the ancient Mayan civilisation, say their people have been repressed by large landowners who together with the government and military have taken their land and attempted to destroy their cultures.

Early on, they threatened to move on Mexico City to overthrow the government and hold fair elections so that the

poor would have better representation.

The Zapatistas seized several Chiapas cities on New Year's Day but has retreated to jungle strongholds following heavy attacks by the Mexican army. More than 100 people died in the early days of the rebellion.

Mr. Salinas at first tried to crush the insurgency by calling in thousands of troops, but switched to a strategy of appeasement that included the naming of former Foreign Minister Manuel Camacho Solis as his peace envoy.

In a Thursday speech to a meeting of his cabinet and the country's governors, Mr. Salinas admitted that the rebels were not without a cause.

"On various occasions... I have indicated that it looked as if the Mexican revolution had not happened in Chiapas," he said.

"There have existed political circumstances that must be recognised: Many stories of abuse... on occasion, lack of political work by authorities and organisations to be close to their fellow citizens (and), equally important, lack of opportunities," Mr. Salinas said.

Price helps Cavs stop charging Bulls

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Mark Price led the Cavaliers on a fourth-quarter scoring spree Thursday that helped Cleveland rein in the charging Chicago Bulls.

Price scored five of his 21 points during a decisive 18-2 run midway through the final quarter as the surging Cavs snapped Chicago's seven-game winning streak with a 100-84 win.

Gerald Wilkins, who also scored five points during the surge, finished with 17 points as the Cavs won for the seventh time in their last nine games.

Scottie Pippen had a season-high 31 points to pace the Bulls, who erased a 13-point halftime deficit and closed within 66-65 after three quarters.

The Cavs made 15-of-21 shots from the field in the fourth quarter and outscored the Bulls, 34-19.

Cleveland, which evened its record at 20-20, also has won four straight home games and nine of its last 10 at the coliseum.

Chicago, who fell to a full game behind the Atlanta Hawks in the central division, played without forward Toni Kukoc and guard John Paxson. Kukoc is out with the flu, while

Paxson is sidelined with a strained left hamstring.

In Anaheim, Patrick Ewing sank a 21-foot turn-around jumper in the lane with nine-tenths of a second remaining to lift the Atlantic division leading New York Knicks to a 103-101 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers.

Ewing, whose put-back with 30 seconds left brought New York within 99-98, backed in Elmore Spencer on the right side of the key and drained a high-arching shot to send the Knicks to their eighth win in 10 games. Ewing, who had 32 points, also made a key block on Harold Ellis with 44 seconds to play.

In Seattle, Gary Payton had 21 points and Ricky Pierce and Sam Perkins each scored 20 to help the SuperSonics snap a season-high three-game losing streak with a 102-92 win over the New Jersey Nets.

Kenny Anderson had 20 points and Benoit Benjamin scored 18 for the Nets.

In Houston, Hakeem Olajuwon scored eight of his 24 points in the pivotal second quarter as the Rockets built a 25-point halftime lead and cruised to a 113-97 victory over the struggling Sacramento Kings.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Faisali draws with Kuwait's Al Salimiya 1-1

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Faisali Friday drew with Kuwait's Al Salimiya 1-1 in both teams' final matches in the Arab Cup Winners' Cup Soccer tournament held in Doha, Qatar. Salimiya's goal was scored in the 39th minute of the first half by Issa Falah and Al Faisali's Subhi Suleiman scored the equaliser five minutes later. Although Al Faisali dominated most of the match, it was unable to adjust the result and end a streak of losses and bad performance. In earlier matches, Al Faisali was beaten by Al Ahli of Qatar 3-0, Tunisia's Al Najim Al Sahili 2-1 and Sudanese Marda 3-1. Thus Al Faisali was eliminated from the championship's first round and is expected back in Amman Sunday.

FIFA blocks \$170,000 from Cameroon

YAOUNDE (AFP) — FIFA has just blocked 100 million AFA francs to Cameroon for their World Cup preparations, a reliable source revealed here Friday. The news comes on the day Cameroon World Cup spokesman Paul Celestin Ndembiyemba said the nation's organising committee would be discussing World Cup accommodation plus sponsoring spin-offs. Also, weekly journal Dikalo said Thursday English company Reebok offered 3 billion AFA francs (\$5 million) in sponsorship for the Lions. However, the offer was not confirmed Friday by Cameroon officials.

Russian jumper breaks record

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian triple jumper Inna Lassovskaya beat her women's indoors world record, leaping 14.78 metres at the armed forces winter championships here Thursday. Last January 14, she had set previous world record at 14.61 metres, improving on the 14.47 metres set by Ukrainian Inessa Kravets March 14, 1993 in Toronto.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH
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DIAMONDS TO GOLD

East-West vulnerable. East deals.
NORTH
♠ A 10 8 7
♥ A Q 5 4
♦ A Q
♣ 7 6 5
WEST
♠ 3
♥ 10 9 7
♦ 8 7 6 5 4
♣ J 10 2
SOUTH
♠ K Q J 9 6 5 4
♥ 3 2
♦ J 3
♣ Q 4
The bidding:
East South West North
1 ♠ 3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠
Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Jack of ♠
Listen to the bidding. More often than not there are enough clues in the auction to make the play of the hand an open book.
At favorable vulnerability, we endorse South's decision to preempt at the three-level despite the fact the side-suit distribution could not have been worse. The fine seven-card suit in itself gave the interference a measure of safety. North's raise was impeccable.
The defenders started with two winning clubs and East continued with a third round of the suit. Declarer ruffed, drew trumps in one round and led a diamond to the queen. That lost to East's king and a diamond was returned. Declarer came to hand with a trump and tried the heart finesse—down one.
Had East not opened the bidding, this line would have offered a 75 percent probability of landing the contract—as good a chance as any. But East almost surely held both red kings for the opening bid, so in effect declarer was taking a line that had no hope at all.
The diamond finesse is an illusion. Had South paid more attention to the auction, the contract is virtually laydown.
After ruffing the third club and drawing trumps, declarer should lead a diamond to the ace and continue with the queen of diamonds. As expected, East wins the king, but is ensnared in an endplay. A minor-suit return allows declarer to discard a heart from hand while ruffing in dummy's major tenace. Either way, making use of the information at hand allows declarer to bring home the contract.

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French driver Francois Delecour (right) and Escort Cosworth, held off a trio of world champions Didier Grotaloup spray champagne pions to finish 65 seconds clear of reigning after winning the 62nd Monte Carlo Rally on Thursday. Delecour, at the wheel of a Ford

Harding admits failure to tell what she knew

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Her hands trembling and her voice strained, Tonya Harding admitted Thursday that she failed to come forward with what she learned after the attack on Nancy Kerrigan, but pleaded not to be denied "my last chance" at an Olympic gold medal.

The U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) said it was "deeply concerned" about Harding's admission. The committee and the U.S. Figure Skating Association have said Harding could be removed from the team if she is linked to the attack.

"I had no prior knowledge of the planned assault on Nancy Kerrigan," Harding said. "I am responsible, however, for failing to report things I learned about the assault when I returned home from nationals."

"Many of you will be unable to forgive me for that. It will be difficult for me to forgive myself."

Her statement came as her ex-husband, Jeff Gillooly, spoke to investigators for the second consecutive day in what a source said was an attempt to cut a deal in exchange for implicating Harding in the Jan. 6 attack.

Harvey Schiller, executive director of the USOC, issued a statement saying the organization "is deeply concerned with statements made today by Tonya Harding relative to her stated knowledge of the attack on Nancy Kerrigan at the national championships."

The figure skating association said Harding would be on the list of official entries in the Lillehammer Games submitted to the USOC, but the association has appointed a hearing panel to investigate, a first step



Tonya Harding

in the process that could lead to her removal from the team. The USOC noted that the women's figure skating roster can be changed as late as Feb. 21.

Schiller said Harding's name would be on the U.S. roster submitted to international Olympic officials Jan. 31, but added that the USOC "is prepared under constitutional procedures, to initiate any action deemed appropriate relative to the conduct of any athlete entered in the games."

The Oregonian newspaper reported in its Friday edition that Harding lied to authorities early in her Jan. 18 interview with them, then changing her story when her interrogators told her they knew she wasn't telling the truth.

The newspaper quoted unidentified sources as saying that after investigators said they knew she was lying, Harding conferred with her lawyer, then came back and amended her answers. In those amended answers, she implicated Gillooly, the Oregonian said.

Venables appointed England boss

WEMBLEY, England (AP) — Terry Venables was appointed Friday as coach of England's National soccer team.

The 51-year-old former Tottenham and Barcelona manager signed a 2 1/2-year contract which will take him through the 1996 European Championships in England.

He replaces Graham Taylor, who resigned in November after England's failure to reach this summer's World Cup finals.

"I'm delighted and honored to be appointed," Venables said.

"It's been a very turbulent time for me," he said. "Now what I want to do is put all the distractions behind me and concentrate on the most important task of my career."

Venables was referring to allegations that he was involved in transfer and other soccer transactions that breached Football Association (FA) regulations.

"We are satisfied with the assurances we have received from Terry Venables," said F.A. chairman Sir Bert Millichip. "The very fact that he is being appointed illustrates our faith in him."

Millichip declined to discuss details of the contracts, but news reports said it includes safeguards to protect the F.A. against any further damaging revelations about Venables' business dealings.

Sampras to face Martin in Australian Open final

MELBOURNE (AP) — It's an all-American final between two all-American guys.

It's the top player in the sport Pete Sampras — against no-name Todd Martin at the Australian Open.

Sampras was awesome in ending the two-year reign of his friend and rival Jim Courier, winning 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 in the semifinals Friday without dropping a serve.

Martin was methodical, and occasionally inspired, as he defeated two-time champion Stefan Edberg of Sweden, the No. 4 seed, 3-6, 7-6 (9-7), 7-6 (9-7), 7-6 (7-4) to progress to the first Grand Slam final of his career.

Sampras, the world's top-ranked player, kept on track for his third successive Grand Slam title. He already is the Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion.

He took just 2 hours, 2 minutes to outplay Courier, his friend and sometime gold partner.

Sampras will be bidding to become the first man since Roy Emerson in 1964-65 to hold the Wimbledon, U.S. Open and Australian titles simultaneously.

It will be the first all-American men's final at the tournament since Johan Kriek beat Steve Denton in 1982.

So complete was Sampras' dominance over the defending champion that Courier did not get a break point until the fourth game of the third set. Courier had only four forehand winners in the entire match.

"That was one of the better matches I've played so far in my career," said Sampras. "Everything really clicked today. I really couldn't play any better."

Both finalists are laid-back, deliberate and oh, so polite. Their mom nad pop and apple pie images are a far cry from the brashness of their predecessors Jimmy Connors, John McEnroe and Andre Agassi.

Martin capitalized on Edberg's below-par serve to beat the 1985 and 1987 champion in a very tight match.

The fast-rising former college star said he was "pretty excited."

Edberg missed the opportunity to play in his sixth Australian Open final. He had been runnerup three of the previous four years.

Martin, a 23-year-old from Lansing, Michigan, has risen from 73rd to 12th in the world rankings over the last 12 months.

The No. 9 seed sent service



Todd Martin

returns rocketing past Edberg on both the forehand and backhand sides and frequently was able to pass Edberg when the Swede charged the net.

"He read my serve," conceded Edberg, who said he served at only "85 to 90 percent" of his ability.

The win took Martin 3 hours, 50 minutes.

"I've believed I could do this for a long time," said Martin, who has won only one title in his professional career. Edberg was 24-13 in tiebreakers last year — the fifth best average in tennis — but Martin kept his nerve after squandering first a service break in the fourth set and then four match points in the final tiebreaker. He clinched victory with an ace.

Martin served consistently well throughout the match, hammering down 13 aces and only one double-fault. He hit 93 winners to Edberg's 74.

Martin missed several passing shots by inches in the first set, when Edberg used lobs to strand the American at the net.

But those passing shots started going in during the second set, as Martin reeled shots down both lines. Martin led the second set 5-3, but lost three straight games and had to win the set in a tiebreaker.

Edberg saved three set points in the third-set tiebreaker, including one easy volley at the net that Martin slammed wildly long. But Martin prevailed on his fourth set point, passing Edberg with a forehand shot and punching the air in triumph.

Martin also won the fourth set in a tiebreaker, taking it 7-5 after leading 6-0.

He slammed an ace down the middle, then hit a ball high into the stands and raised his arms in triumph.

Edberg, who had said before the match that Martin had nothing in his armory to worry him, patted the tall American on the back as they met at the net.

Even while he was scoring the biggest victory of his young career, Martin maintained his mild-mannered demeanor. He apologized after almost hitting a ballboy with a shot, and lifted his finger to his mouth to silence a spectator who yelled in triumph after an Edberg double-fault.

Martin became the lowest-seeded player to make the Australian open final since Miloslav Mecir, also seeded ninth, lost to Ivan Lendl in the all-Czech 1989 final.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Roman Catholic mission to Tiger heartland

COLOMBO (AFP) — A Roman Catholic church delegation has disclosed a peace plan with Tamil Tiger guerrillas in Lanka's embattled northern Jaffna peninsula, the sources here said Friday. The delegation, led by Archbishop Nicholas Marcus Fernando, had held talks with Anton Balasingham, the theoretician of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) Thursday, the sources said. The archbishop is currently on a visit to the island's northern region which is mostly under rebel control. The bishop presided over a "peace meeting" of Catholic priests in the region, the sources said. In January last year, the Anglican bishop of Colombo, Kenneth Fernando, visited Jaffna and secured the release of two policemen held by Tigers, but his mission was criticised by hardliners in the majority Sinhalese community. The latest Catholic initiative came as Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe called on the Tigers to reconsider a decision to execute their deputy leader and free all captured security personnel in a bid to help a fresh peace effort.

Sudan rejects Eritrean infiltration

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan, responding to Eritrean charges, has said it would never allow factions opposed to neighbouring governments to cross its borders and attack them, a Sudanese newspaper said on Friday. The government-owned Al Nasr (Victory) daily said Sudan's United Nations mission had responded to charges relayed by Eritrea to the Security Council about attacks by infiltrators from Sudan. The Sudanese statement said Khartoum respected the sovereignty of neighbouring countries, did not interfere in their affairs and would not allow any hostile group to cross its borders to threaten their security, it said. Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki charged about a month ago that 20 militants crossing from Sudan had been killed in clashes with the Eritrean army. Sudan at the time denied any knowledge of the alleged incident. "Sudan cannot permit any force to enter Eritrea to threaten its security and stability," the Sudanese statement quoted by Al Nasr said. It said Sudan's relationship with Eritrea was marked by friendship and cooperation and Khartoum, despite its limited resources, had tried to help Eritrea's development since it gained independence from Ethiopia last May. About half a million Eritrean refugees live in Sudan.

Mauritania holds local elections

NOUAKCHOTT (AFP) — Some 745,000 Mauritians were called to the polls Friday to vote for their local councils, almost two years after the first multi-party general elections were boycotted by the main opposition. Voting proceeded calmly, witnesses and reports said, with the polls in the 208 districts of the country closed at 7:00 p.m. (1900 GMT). Officials gave no details of the turnout. The results are to be released on Saturday. Analysts said the political stakes were not high in the poll, which were seen more as a test of the relative popularity of the three main parties, since the opposition was this time taking part. The ruling Democratic and Social Republican Party (PRDS) has presented 194 lists of candidates, while the main opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UFD) has put up 60 lists. The UFD boycotted the March 1992 general election after its secretary general, Ahmad Ould Daddah, was defeated two months earlier in a presidential poll where the party complained of irregularities.

Israel to train, equip Congolese army

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel has signed a multi-million-dollar deal to train and equip the Congolese army, the Yediot Aharanot daily reported here Friday. Some 20 Israeli reserve officers and some former officers of the Shin Bet internal security service will train Brazzaville's forces, the newspaper said. The deal, regarded as one of the largest military aid contracts clinched by Israel in recent years, was signed by the Congolese government and the Israeli arms export firm Levanad. It was approved by the Israeli defence ministry. Supporters of Congolese President Pascal Lissouba clashed with opposition militants in November and December last year. The West African state restored diplomatic relations with Israel in 1991.

Curfew in Madagascar to quell student riot

ANTANANARIVO (R) — Police imposed an overnight curfew on a town on the Indian Ocean island state of Madagascar after students sacked businesses and homes, state-run radio said on Friday. It said the curfew was imposed on Thursday on Antsirabe, 170 kilometres south of the capital of Antananarivo, where students wrecked 10 homes and businesses owned by Asians. Police sources said students took to the streets to protest against teachers joining a 48-hour strike by state employees.

Israelis beat up Palestinian photographer

RAMALLAH, occupied West Bank (AFP) — Israeli troops beat up and threatened to kill a Palestinian press photographer during clashes between the army and Palestinians here Friday, journalists said. Journalists reported that 24-year-old Atta Wessat, employed by the Israeli photographic agency Zoom 77, was beaten with rifle bullets by members of an Israeli undercover unit who were dressed as Arabs. The soldiers, later joined by border guards, threatened to shoot Mr. Wessat at point blank range. He was taken to hospital with facial cuts. The Israeli army has banned photographing members of undercover units to avoid revealing their identities.

Nigerian, Indian beheaded in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (AFP) — A Nigerian and an Indian were beheaded in Jeddah in western Saudi Arabia Friday for drug-trafficking, the Saudi Interior Ministry announced. The Nigerian, Mauf Shikumi, was arrested as he was trying to hand over heroin, and the Indian, Zahed Hussein, was found trying to bring hashish into the country, the ministry said in a statement read out on Saudi Television. The executions brought to three the number of people beheaded in the kingdom since Jan. 1. A Saudi man was beheaded on Jan. 6 for murder. Saudi Arabia introduced the death sentence for drug-traffickers and persistent drug abusers in 1987. Some 85 people were executed in the kingdom last year, the Interior Ministry said.

Saudi king backs Charles's school

LONDON (R) — King Fahd of Saudi Arabia donated £2.5 million (\$3.74 million) on Friday to an architecture school set up by Prince Charles, calling the gift a gesture of thanks for the British heir apparent's interest in Islam. The money was handed over to institute officials by the Saudi ambassador to London, Ghazi Aligobari, the Saudi embassy said in a statement. It said the donation "was in appreciation of the Prince of Wales's initiative in supporting a meaningful dialogue between Islam and the West," a reference to a speech in which Prince Charles called for greater understanding between the two traditions. The prince's speech last October, which paid tribute to the historical importance of Islam, was well-received in the Muslim World and earned him a warm welcome when he toured Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, shortly afterwards.

Second ex-Italian premier for graft trial

TURIN, Italy (R) — Former Italian Prime Minister Giovanni Goria was committed Friday for trial on corruption charges, judicial sources said. Mr. Goria, whose trial will begin in the northern city of Turin on Feb. 22, was the second former prime minister to be put up for trial in two days. Bettino Craxi will go on trial in a separate case in Italy's graft scandals on March 29.

Yemeni leaders invited to Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein has invited Yemeni government leaders Ali Abdullah Saleh and Ali Salem Al Beedh as well as other Yemeni politicians to Amman to sign a reconciliation accord to end the political crisis plaguing the Arabian Peninsula country since mid-1992, informed sources said Friday.

But there is no definite indication yet that the signing ceremony could take place in Jordan since some Yemeni politicians are arguing that such an event should be held in Yemen itself and that all interested parties and mediators, including King Hussein who played a major role in Yemeni mediation, be invited to attend it.

The sources, reporting on Jordan's efforts to end the seven-month-old crisis triggered by southern Yemeni allegations that northerners were seeking to dominate the country, said the Jordanian offer was made to the Yemeni leaders last week when the King's advisor Khaled Al Karaki visited Sanaa and Aden.

"Tentatively, the first week of February was proposed for the possible signing of the accord," which was drafted by a Yemeni national committee last week and endorsed by almost all political factions in Yemen, said one of the sources.

The King is expected back after visits to the U.S., Austria and Croatia in the next two or three days, the sources noted.

The Yemeni summit in Amman, if it takes place, will be the crowning of King Hussein's efforts to end the crisis in Yemen, with which Jordan maintains very close relations. The King commands respect among all Yemeni factions.

According to sources in Sanaa, the federal capital of Yemen which was also the capital of North Yemen before the May 1990 merger, and in Aden, the southern stronghold which served as pre-unity South Yemeni capital, both Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beedh welcomed the King's invitation. But it was not clear whether they agreed that the signing of the accord take place or Amman.

"Some of the influential Yemeni political leaders are insisting that the signing of the accord take place on Yemeni soil since it is a Yemeni national reconciliation and reform agreement," said a Yemeni source.

"They say that all Arab and non-Arab leaders who had been active in trying to mediate the crisis be invited to attend the ceremony," said the source.

Hosting the signing is not an end in itself for Jordan, which has offered its good offices to supervise the amalgamation of the armies of the former North and South Yemen.

Despite the merger, the two Yemeni armies have not been incorporated into a single unit, and this state of affairs had led to tension at one point in the run-up to the accord, with both sides accusing each other of threatening military moves.

Mr. Saleh, leader of the General People's Congress (GPC), ruled the conservative North Yemen and Mr. Beedh of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) headed the Marxist south before the merger of Yemen after 300 years of separation.

In general elections held in April last year, the GPC and YSP emerged as the two dominant groups and agreed to form a coalition government headed by Mr. Saleh as president and Mr. Beedh as vice-president. The Islamist Al Islah party was later invited to the coalition.

But political differences emerged thereafter, with Mr. Beedh accusing Mr. Saleh and his GPC of trying to dominate the country and running an elimination campaign against southern leaders.

The reconciliation accord drawn up last week envisages political and economic reforms demanded by Mr. Beedh and accepted by Mr. Saleh.

Turks mount massive raid on PKK in Iraq

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkish warplanes bombed a Turkish Kurd rebel camp inside Iraq early Friday, causing "heavy losses" at the base, believed to house 1,600 guerrillas, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said.

A military spokesman said it was the air force's biggest raid on Kurdish rebel positions in the past 10 years and more than 50 aircraft took part.

All the planes returned safely to base after inflicting "heavy losses" on armed members of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) at the Zaleh camp. Ms. Ciller told a news conference after being briefed at headquarters of the armed forces in Ankara.

Leaders of the PKK, the main Kurdish group fighting for a separate homeland in Turkey and responsible for kidnapping a number of foreigners in southern Turkey, were among the casualties "according to our information," she added.

"This operation will continue, all targets were successfully hit," she said, without giving details.

A military spokesman said: "Fifty F-4 and F-16 planes as well as six helicopters which took off from bases at Erhac near Malatya (in the east) and Diyarbakir (southeast) carried out a single raid on the Zaleh camp."

It was the Turkish air force's "most important air operation against PKK positions for the past 10 years" and the first one against this particular camp, Colonel Dogu Silamcioglu said.

Turkish radio said the attack caused many casualties. Ms. Ciller said Zaleh, located on the mountainous Iraq-Iran border about 110 kilometres south of Turkey, contained 1,600 guerrillas, including 300 women fighters and some PKK leaders.

This camp had replaced the Bekaa Valley, she said. "Terrorists were being trained and sheltered here and logistic support was being supplied to the PKK from the camp."

For much of the past decade, the PKK's main training camps were in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, but these were reported closed last year after repeated Turkish protests.

Hosokawa, opposition work out compromise

TOKYO (Agencies) — Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa reached an agreement with opposition leader Yoshio Kono Friday on resolving a deadlock over political reform, chief Cabinet Secretary Masayoshi Takemura said.

"I have received information that an agreement was reached at the top-level meeting," Mr. Takemura told reporters after three hours of talks between the head of the seven-party coalition and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) president.

Details of the agreement were not immediately available. Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK), the national television network, said Mr. Hosokawa and Mr. Kono resumed their closed-door talks at the parliament building in central Tokyo.

"The agreement should allow Hosokawa to remain as prime minister," an informed source told AFP.

The two men began meeting early Friday evening in an effort to break a stalemate over political reform before the current session of parliament ends Saturday. The meeting was arranged by Lower-House Speaker Takako Doi, who warned the two leaders earlier that time was rapidly running out.

Mr. Kono, facing the prospect of new defections from LDP deputies who support the coalition's political reform bills, told reporters he obtained a "basic understanding" from Ms. Doi but did not elaborate. Mr. Hosokawa on Thursday threatened to resign if his political reform bills, rejected by the upper house last week, failed to become law.

The LDP is desperately trying to prevent Mr. Hosokawa from putting the bills to a fresh vote in the lower house, which would require a two-thirds majority to override last week's upper-house rejection by a simple majority.

Mr. Hosokawa now faces stiff resistance from within his own ruling coalition after agreeing to a controversial LDP demand — to allow limited business donations to individual politicians.

"The Hosokawa government came to power promising political reforms and we're happy that this will be achieved," said Kozo Watanabe, senior member of the coalition's Japan Renewal Party.

"Now we must get to work on what most people want the most — stimulus measures to help the economy," he said.

While up to 70 per cent of



A toddler, one of eight children of Umm Mohammad, plays in the ruins of his home

Floods destroy Wadi Haddadeh home; family homeless, awaits help

By Caroline Farrar
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The family of Umm Mohammad had no inkling that they would wake up homeless when they went to sleep last Sunday, when rains lashed the Wadi Haddadeh area. Now, Umm Mohammad, the family's sole breadwinner, and her eight children are homeless and do not know whom to turn out.

Umm Mohammad recounts that the sound of gushing water woke her up in the middle of the night. Her first concern was for her children. With help from her 13-year-old son, she rescued them. Neighbours called in civil defence to help the family, but Umm Mohammad's home, particularly her kitchen and bathroom, was beyond rescue.

"Nothing was left," Umm Mohammad told the Jordan Times. "All we have now is a stove which we use for cooking as well as heating."

According to Umm Mohammad, municipal workers were building a culvert on nearby Wadi Haddadeh stream but had to abandon the work because of rains.

The rains swept in sand, stone and dirt collected at the culvert site into Umm Mohammad's home.

Municipal officials said Umm Mohammad's home was among the houses affected by the flooding and that some of the houses were built below street level without municipal licence.

They said there was no plan to evacuate the affected families before "alternative homes are available."

In the meantime, Umm Mohammad and her family are in deep distress.

"We were told by the Ministry of Social Development that there is a special emergency fund which provides help after the civil defence department provides a certificate," said Umm Mohammad, adding that she did not know when help would be forthcoming.

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COLUMN

Bulger killers 'could be freed in 8 years'

LONDON (AFP) — The two 11-year-old killers of toddler James Bulger could be freed within eight years, judicial officials quoted by the British media said Wednesday. Jon Venables and Robert Thompson were sentenced to an indefinite period of custody in November for the murder of two-year-old James, who was tortured and beaten to death in February 1993 near a railway line in the northwest port of Liverpool. No extenuating circumstances were found for the killing which caused considerable anguish and heart-searching in Britain. The boys' three-week trial drew worldwide media coverage. In line with British law, trial Judge Michael Morland passed on his recommendations on the length of time the killers should spend in custody to the home secretary. Reports at the time of the trial, based on precedents, said the two boys were likely to be held for at least 20 years, initially in juvenile detention centres and later in jail. According to judicial sources cited by British newspapers but not confirmed officially, Judge Morland recommended that Venables and Thompson should be detained for "a minimum of eight years." The report drew immediate criticism from James' grandmother, who warned that the killers' lives "would be at risk" if they were released early. The Bulger family's lawyer Sean Sexton said that a release after eight years would be "totally unacceptable."

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